



# SERMONS AND REMINISCENCES.

BY  
REV RICHARD L. STILWELL,  
OF THE CENTRAL NEW YORK CONFERENCE.

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NEW YORK  
PHILLIPS & HUNT  
CINCINNATI:  
WALDEN & STOWE.  
1883.

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## D E D I C A T O R Y.

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To the few surviving friends on the Troy District, East Genesee Conference, and their offspring, whom I learned to love in their infancy and youth during a pastorate of twenty-one years on nine charges \* within its bounds ; and

To ALL, both of the laity and of the ministry, in whose friendships, prayers, and counsels I have shared amid peculiar trials, responsibilities, and triumphs, I do most cordially, earnestly, and prayerfully dedicate this volume, which is a part of the outgrowth of forty-one years in the itinerancy of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

R. L. STILWELL.

M'LEAN, N. Y., Sept. 15, 1883.

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\*Canton, 2; Jackson, 3; Pine River Mission, 1; Mansfield, 3; Ulster and Smithfield, 2; Knoxville and Chatham, 2; East Charleston, 2; Burlington, 2; Liberty Corners and Monroeton, 4.—21.



ON the 20th of June we were again at Milo Center, and had the opportunity of addressing fine congregations in their reconstructed and commodious house of worship. The Church, under the pastoral care of Rev. R. L. Stilwell, has been favored with a revival during the past winter and spring, the result of which is quite an addition to the membership. Among these are some heads of families in middle life who are ready for any service, and also many young people on whom the responsibilities of the Church must rest in coming years.

Brother Stilwell is almost a stranger in the northern part of the work, and we take occasion to say, what would be entirely superfluous where he is well known, namely, that he is one of the best preachers in the Conference. He is not such by the accident of genius, but by hard, persistent work in the appropriate duties of the ministry. He is one of a few who have profited by changing their course in mid-life from oral to exclusively written sermons. From others, not from himself, we learn that he has a volume of sermons ready for the press, and that an arrangement is in progress for their publication. That they will be creditable to him and useful to the public we are very confident.—*Extract from a published article by the influential and widely known Rev. William Hosmer, D.D., for many years an able minister and editor in Central New York—inserted in this volume without the knowledge of Mr. Stilwell.*



## INTRODUCTORY.

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**I**N the year 1840, the undersigned became acquainted with the esteemed author of these Sermons and Reminiscences. We first met as classmates at the Genesee Wesleyan Seminary, Lima, N. Y., and soon after entered into that more intimate relation of roommates. In this relation acquaintance early ripened into friendship, a friendship which deepened as the months came and went, and which has not lessened during the varied activities and the more numerous cares and responsibilities which have been crowded into the life of each. He was a young man of pleasing presence, pure speech, sweet spirit, tender sympathies, devout life, and true as steel. His student and church life, while at the Seminary, was an inspiration and a benediction to his associates and friends.

Richard Lounsbury Stilwell was born in Hector, Tompkins Co., N. Y., Jan. 27, 1819. Though dependent for his subsistence upon his own labors from the age of fourteen, he found time for intellectual culture, devoting his snatches of leisure time to study, and at the age of nineteen was in charge of a large school in the town of Washington, Erie County, Pa., and, later, of one in Jackson, Pa. In the latter place he united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1838, and a year later was licensed to "exhort" by Rev. Matthew Hanna. He was licensed to preach June 22, 1842, by the Quarterly Conference of Southport and Jackson Circuit, then under the pastoral supervision of Rev. E. Colson, with Rev. Jonas Dodge as presiding elder. On August 6, of the same year, he was relicensed to preach by the Lawrenceville Quarterly Conference, (Rev. William R. Babcock, presiding elder,) and recommended as having "gifts, grace, and usefulness" to the Genesee Conference for admission on trial. He was promptly received, and was sent for his first itinerant ministerial and pastoral service to Canton, Pa., where he remained two years.

At the close of his full pastoral term at Canton, young Stilwell successfully passed his examinations, and was elected to deacon's orders, but, owing to great diffidence, he asked to be permitted to remain on probation for a third year, and his request was granted. At the Buffalo Conference, August 24, 1845, he was ordained deacon by Bishop Janes, and admitted to full Conference membership; and two years later, at the session in Geneva, he was ordained elder by Bishop Morris. His fields of labor have been as follows:

Canton, Pa., two years; Jackson, three; Pine River Mission, one; Urbana, two; Hector, N. Y., three; Ulster and Smithfield, Pa., two; Knoxville, two; Mansfield, three; East Charleston, two; Burlington, two; Liberty Corners and Monroeton, four; Harmonyville, N. Y., one; Milo Center, two; Chemung, two; M'Grawville, one; Preble, one; Erin and Breedspoint, two; Varna and Etna, one; Sheldrake, two; Dresden, one; M'Lean, (his present charge,) two;—a total continuous effective itinerant ministerial record, thus far, of forty-one years, during which he has received into the Church nearly a thousand persons, in whose memory, as well as in the memory of a multitude of others to whom he has ministered in his varied pastoral relations, he is permanently enshrined.

As our friend is still enjoying excellent health—apparently having a delightful evening time of life, in the midst of happy home associations, and enjoying the esteem and love of an ever-widening circle of friends—as well as still doing vigorous service in his lengthened and useful ministry, it is too early for a memorial address, or for any other words of merited eulogy.

It is well that this volume is given to the public. The author is doing a real service by yielding assent to the suggestions of his former parishioners and friends,\* and devoting the care necessary to place in more permanent form these "Sermons and Reminiscences." They will be read and re-read with ever-recurring interest, by the many to whom he so kindly and affectionately refers in his fitting and touching dedicatory address.

W. H. DE PUY.

METHODIST BOOK CONCERN, NEW YORK, Sept. 20, 1883.

\* See "Extract," page 4.

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# SERMONS AND REMINISCENCES.

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## THE GREAT QUESTION.

"Sirs, what must I do to be saved?"—Acts xvi, 30.

THE solution of important questions requires superior intelligence; and, as we can scarcely conceive of another of equal importance with that which we have read as our text, we enter upon its discussion with feelings best indicated by the solemn inquiry, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Before we seek to answer the great question, "What must I do to be saved?" you will allow us to dwell on a few thoughts suggested by it. And

1. To be saved is a matter of the greatest moment. "To be saved!" Where in the vocabulary of men can be found other three words freighted with such significance and suggestive power? The soul's conceptions of woe and its ability to endure, its conceptions of bliss and its capacity to enjoy, must all be known before the mind can fathom their whole import. Indeed, a soul must first be lost forever, and then be saved forever, to be able to form a just estimate of what there is in salvation. Go ask a sinner whose probation is narrowed down to a moment's

space, and he will try to tell you of its importance, and of the high value he would place on it if it were his. Those quivering lips, those tearful eyes, and oft-repeated prayers, and sighs and groans all "eloquent of woe," are but faint indications of the ordeal through which the soul is passing because it is not saved. Saved! how great would be the contrast? Those lips would warble praise to God. Those eyes would trace the record of some gracious promise given to cheer and nerve the soul, and those prayers would be a rich spiritual legacy to sorrowing friends; while, instead of sighs and groans, sweet rapturous songs of victory would indicate the freeing of the imprisoned spirit, and her readiness to mingle in the anthem of the upper choir, the blended melodies of the redeemed.

"To be saved" is a matter of greatest moment by reason of the fact that society is made up of individuals, and, like the human body, is affected favorably or otherwise by the health or the want of health of every member. Pious men and women are essential; nay, in the order of God, they are indispensable to the preservation and salvation of the wicked and the impious. Hence the genuine conversion of a single individual in a community is a Godsend to it. The farmer may regard the falling of a few drops of rain as a very insignificant affair, when his hopes of an abundant harvest are being blasted by reason of

the absence of a refreshing shower, but drops are essential to every shower. The saving element existing in the Church, in her organic form, should and does exist in every one of her living, healthful members, and every one of these is laboring in some way to bring souls to Jesus.

In some sense men are saved by men; for God works by means, choosing the weak things of the world to confound the wise, and hiding the treasures of his grace “in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of” man. As all the elements of light are comprised in a single ray, and of water in a single drop, so every subject of saving grace should reflect the light divine, that others may be induced to glorify “our Father which art in heaven.” A single lamp may not only afford sufficient light for the one who bears it, but it may be of important service to others who would go in the same direction. Thus it is with Christians. They should esteem salvation not only for the personal comfort and safety which it affords, but also for the good it enables them to do to others. In God’s spiritual economy “no man liveth unto himself.” Christianity forbids his doing so; the claims of society are against it; while the example of Jesus and of his apostles should shame even a desire to do so, back and down to hell. Indeed, no man can live wholly unto himself, for if he will not “live unto him who

died and rose again," he shall be "led captive by the devil at his will." One motive which, with others, should move you to seek "to be saved," is that drawn from the claims of society. Do you say society is corrupt? We admit it; and aver that you have aided in making it so, and that you can make satisfactory reparation in no other way than by your casting into society, from henceforth, the leaven of a holy life. Do you demur and say, I owe society nothing, for it has corrupted me, and if I have corrupted that, I have only done as I was done unto? Well, that is somewhat plausible, I must admit; but you will please bear with me if I try to penetrate a little here. A company of men unite and steal your horse, or succeed in slandering you; if you, in return, steal some one's horse, or slander him, all is square. This is the logic, or rather the rope-of-sand argument, by yourselves constructed, to tie you to yourselves. Ah, it will not, cannot hold you there. You must needs be profoundly ashamed of yourselves if it could. The truth is, that the salvation of society is linked with the salvation of individuals, and you are to seek to be saved with especial reference to this principle. Many, it is to be feared, whose names are enrolled with the people of God, are deceived and deceiving at this very point. Their religion has become so exclusively their own, it is so sacred a thing to self, that they are afraid to speak of it above a whisper in the

conference or the class-meeting, and would deplore its loss as certain should they trust it out into a social prayer-meeting. O that such could be induced to go forth in the spirit of the Saviour, and learn how to bless themselves by blessing others.

2. Another thought suggested by the text is: The salvation of men is attended with difficulties. These, however, are not found in the mind nor in the will of God, but in man himself, in society, and in satanic influence. The heart of man is deceitful and perverse, and selfishness is enthroned in it. This is the result of sin, and its subjects are so stultified by it, as to their own spiritual state, that they think themselves to be rich and increased in goods, and as having need of nothing, when in truth they are “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.” They look on their sins as trifles, and seem to see no necessity of their being washed away. They think that they are about as good as others, and that they need not be concerned if others are not. Thus it is that some of the most vile and corrupt men have come to think they were doing God service, when, in reality, they were doing the very meanest work of the devil. Saul, of Tarsus, was of this class, and will be remembered as constituting an illustrious example.

Another difficulty in the way of individual salvation is found in society. Men, as social beings, are

necessarily affected by social influences. Hence, many who have been made to feel that they were sinners, and as such that they were in very great need of salvation, have found that they have lacked the moral courage to break away from the unholy influence of habitual associations. The gambler has quailed at the thought of what his associates would think and say should he even attempt reformation. The drunkard, alarmed in his sober moments, has encountered, in vision at least, the taunts and ridicule of brother sots, and has turned away from weeping, pleading family and friends, and even from interceding Jesus, to drown conviction in the flowing bowl. Indeed, it is no marvel that "the righteous scarcely are saved" in the midst of so much social corruption as is found in this sinning world of ours. We appeal to the unconverted here, this hour, and ask if you have not been influenced to your spiritual harm by the almost omnipotent control of others? What will friends think? What will they say? In short, in what esteem will I be held by them? Have not such or similar thoughts caused you to vacillate, unnerved your hearts, caused you to shrink from duty, and prevented your enlisting in a hearty and persevering effort "to be saved?" If so, please remember that it is from the midst of such social influences and hindrances that our Jesus is gathering the jewels with which to bedeck his crown. "Be not faithless," then,

“but believing.” What has been possible to others is possible to you also.

There is one more fact in the way of personal salvation, and that is satanic influence. This reached the Son of God. He was “tempted of the devil,” yet he was “without sin.” There is, therefore, hope for those who are now tempted. Thus reasons an apostle: Christ “being tempted, he is able to succor them that are tempted.” Be not disheartened, then, for “the Lion of the tribe of Judah” will give you strength to resist temptation ; and what others have done in this regard, you may do also. Yield not to despair, then, for the triumph of others may yet be yours. Enlist in an earnest warfare against these difficulties, and an Almighty arm shall bear you on to victory? Commit yourselves fully to the work, and an energy, heaven-inspired, shall make you feel that you are well able to go up and possess the goodly land unliurt of your enemies by the way; for our text suggests,

3. That personal salvation requires personal effort. Yet this and only this, though commenced as soon as the first sin was committed, and continued for a lifetime, could never so avail as to secure the salvation of any soul. As a single fountain is not sufficient to make the majestic river, though possessing the elements of that larger flood, so personal effort of itself is not sufficient to bear the soul beyond threatened

ruin, or to elevate it to heaven and to God. Still without this there is absolutely no hope for any who have sinned. The fact of a Saviour's love may be attested by miracles wrought on human bodies and human souls ; heaven may roll down on the sinner's ear the chorus of its eternal song ; hell may send forth its ceaseless, warning wail ; the ministry may explain and urge "the glorious Gospel of Christ ;" the Spirit may woo and strive ; pious friends may weep over and blessingly entreat ; but unless the sinner himself acts as God has willed that he should, there is no hope and no salvation for him.

Is the inquiry still, "What must I do to be saved ?" Thank God, the answer is at hand : " Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." Believing on the Lord Jesus Christ holds the same relation to faith in him that supplication holds to prayer. Faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is a simple act, believing on him is that act continued. Saving faith is that act of the mind by which Jesus is accepted as the soul's Saviour. Believing on him is a continuous reliance on him for every needed blessing. Hence the salvation promised to those who believe on the Lord Jesus Christ is put in the future tense, " shalt be saved." Salvation succeeds, and not as some teach, precedes belief in him. Faith looks out upon Calvary—the cross—the bleeding Jesus there. Belief runs with the polluted soul in her arms, and holds it

up to catch the healing stream, and to bind it to the cross. Thus bound I seem to hear her singing :

“ Could my tears forever flow,  
Could my zeal no languor know,  
These for sin could not atone ;  
Thou must save, and thou alone :  
In my hand no price I bring ;  
Simply to thy cross I cling.”

Then, with the look of greatest, sweetest comfort and satisfaction, I hear her soliloquizing thus :

“ Forever here my rest shall be,  
Close to thy bleeding side ;  
This all my hope, and all my plea,  
“ For me the Saviour died.’ ”

Sinner! “ believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.” He is able and he is willing to save you. Only in him is merit, all availing and communicable. Our faith resting on any other being could never bring a saving energy to our hearts, or our believing continue it there; for however strong faith is, it cannot draw merit out of that which has no merit in itself. Many have very strongly believed that if they were to be saved they would be saved; but such believing has never resulted in the salvation of any soul, and never will. Others have very largely believed in the salvation of all souls, but so far as I have been able to learn, not one of these have been at all remarkably distinguished for their

love and obedience to God. And many, O how many, have believed in the infallibility of the Pope, and the remission of sins by priestly interposition and prerogative ; but, after all, they think a flaming purgatory lies between the very best of them and heaven. Indeed, believing in any other being or thing in the universe cannot result in the salvation of any soul. Said the Saviour to the Jews, “ Ye believe in God, believe also in me.” The first is important, the latter not less so. It is as if he had said, “ God is your Creator, this you believe. He is your Redeemer, believe this also.”

The truly awakened sinner sees himself in need of an almighty Saviour. The Bible introduces him to One on whose vesture and thigh is written, “ King of kings and Lord of lords,” and it declares him to be able to save even to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. He must, therefore, be almighty ; and if so, he must be God, as the idea of two distinct almighty beings existing at the same time must be too absurd to be entertained for a moment. Arians have evidently made a discovery. To avoid the conclusion just mentioned, they teach that man is not totally depraved, for if so depraved, an almighty Saviour is needed, but if not so depraved, a *very good man* may afford help sufficient ; if not, a super-angelic being can. The assistance of a small lad may be all that is necessary to save the life of him, who,

wrecked in the sea, has had skill and strength sufficient to very nearly reach the shore, but it requires the strength and wisdom of a man to plunge beneath the wave, descend to the bottom, search out the motionless body, grasp it, and bear it up and on to where life may be restored. So in a spiritual sense. If man is not very much depraved, he needs but little help, it may be only an Arian Saviour; but if totally depraved, he needs help that is mighty, a Saviour who is Christ the Jehovah. Surely, great sinners need a great Saviour, and as the Bible knows nothing of small sinners, it is safe to conclude that a little Saviour was never provided. As in nature so in grace, there is wonderful adaptation. Prodigious forests are well suited to huge beasts, mighty seas to ponderous whales and to "Great Easterns;" and, blessed be God! a great Saviour to great sinners. However appalling, withering, and crushing be the views we may be compelled to entertain respecting our personal guiltiness, they cannot exceed those we are authorized to hold respecting him who has "come to seek and to save that which was lost." What ridiculous folly it would be for a man to purchase a huge elephant to draw his little son in a hand carriage through the streets, when youthful friends of the lad were fully competent and really anxious to perform that service for him? Judge ye, then, of the character of the act which provides for sinners that

are almost saints a Saviour of such dignity and glory as the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Only Jesus, only Jesus,  
Can do helpless sinners good,”

but believing in him, the soul is as positively advancing in the way to heaven as is the body in the act of walking from its residence to the house of God. How simple is the condition of salvation! How easy of apprehension! You are glad, and so am I, that believing in Calvinism or in Universalism, in Arminianism or Roman Catholicism, in sprinkling, pouring, or immersion, as the only mode of Christian baptism, was never made the condition of salvation; but that as all men have to depend on the sun for light, so all are required to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ “to be saved,” and that to behold the sun men must turn their eyes toward it, so “to be saved” they must “look unto Jesus.” It would be a beautiful scene in an angel’s vision to behold the eyes of all men turning eastward, in early morning, to get a view of the rising king of day; but such a scene would pale and melt away in the presence of one brought to birth by all sinners lifting up and sending forth believing prayer to the world’s Redeemer, “the King of glory!” Blessed be God! The sun in the heavens is no more competent to afford all eyes with light than is the Lord Jesus

Christ to save all who will believe their way to him.  
In him “all fullness dwells,” and

“ Plenteous grace with thee is found,  
Grace to cover all my sin.”

As a few lamps would be utterly insufficient to furnish light for the world in the absence of the sun, so any thing but an almighty Saviour and an active faith in him must leave the souls of men in endless despair. Such a Saviour is offered to you, and offered now. Freely as the blessed sunlight, his grace, which bringeth salvation, falls upon you. In tones sweeter than the music of angels, Jesus, by the Gospel, invites you. Only believe on him, “and thou shalt be saved,” a consciousness of which shall give you a heart of joy and fill your souls with heavenly comfort.

“ Believe in him who died for thee,  
And, sure as he hath died,  
Thy debt is paid, thy soul is free,  
And thou art justified.”

## HOW TO INHERIT ALL THINGS.

"He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son."—REV. xxi, 7.

WE live in the midst of antagonisms—of opposing forces. Good and evil, holiness and sin, God and Satan, are striving for the mastery. Man, in his exaltation and happiness, is sought by the former; man, in his degradation and misery, is the objective point and end of the latter. Man, therefore, is not an idle and uninterested spectator; nor can he be a mere passive subject of these influences and forces. Endowed with reason and volition, he is capable of being moved by motives. Inheriting the desire for happiness, he cannot be wholly indifferent to the only rational plan by which he can secure it; and thirsting for honor and glory, he may hear and heed the announcement, "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." Let us then consider what is to be overcome, the helps afforded, and the good promised to the successful.

1. What is to be overcome? We answer: The motions of sin within us. By these we mean the sinful thought, feelings, and principles which exhibit

themselves in our words, our actions, and our lives. That is in what constitutes us sinners. Sinful thought is the seed from which wicked feelings, words, and actions grow ; therefore the first great work in every Christian's life is to be the prevention of his sinful thoughts. But the question may arise, "How am I to determine what are sinful thoughts?" We answer : Sinful thoughts excite sinful feelings, and as such feelings always suggest sinful words and actions, it must be easy from the very tendency of our thoughts to decide as to their character. A man may not always speak or act just as he feels, but he will find it impossible to feel as he does not think. The relation of thought to feeling is most intimate and inseparable. As pious thought is the operative force in the moral world, by which it is to be prepared for the millennial glory, so depraved and sinful thought is the grand agent, under Satan, by which souls are prepared to utter the wailings of the lost. As a man "thinketh in his heart, so is he." Our thoughts of God, of the Bible, and of moral obligation have much, O how very much, to do with our lives, our character, and our destiny. All sin, as well as all holiness, in men has its beginning in their thoughts. Hence there is nothing in us or of us that we should watch with a severer scrutiny than our thoughts. They are indices which point toward hell or heaven. If we cannot think wrong of a fellow-

being without feeling wrong toward him ; and if we cannot feel wrong without speaking or acting wrong respecting him, with what force must the fact that we think wrong of God come to our souls, and fasten upon them alarming guilt ! This is the charge which Jehovah brings against man, " Thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thyself." Now, who are they who speak against God, contemn his goodness, trample on his mercies, reject his Son, and grieve his Spirit ? Who but those that have learned to think of him as men never ought to think, and who consequently feel toward him as men should never feel. But our thoughts are not only an index to our feelings and conduct toward God, they also demonstrate our likes and dislikes to the things of God. Who seldom, or carelessly, read the Bible ? They are those, without an exception, who have learned to think wrong of that most important book. Who are they that neglect to hear the Gospel, to attend to its ordinances, and who habitually absent themselves from the prayer-meeting ? Are they not invariably those whose moral sense has become perverted, and whose thoughts are wrong respecting moral obligation ? Compare the thoughts of these persons with the preceptive teachings of the word of God, or with the lessons written by the Spirit on " all truly awakened hearts," and you will not fail to see the wonderful contrast.

The Gospel of Jesus is an interior working force, proposing to make the life right by first making the heart right, to bring the thoughts of men “to the obedience of Christ,” that our feelings, words, and actions may chime a divine harmony to his glorious grace. It is in the thoughts of men that Satan sows his tares, which choke and overtop the wheat of the Gospel, and which, if not overcome, will ultimately leave the soul without a plant of righteousness. Right here it is that so many who have started out in the Christian life have been turned aside, and have lost sight of the heaven which they sought, the home and the rest for which they sighed. They have allowed their thoughts to linger on forbidden subjects, and to read in works of fiction, until ideas and images of the unreal and the false have filled the halls of memory, and cast a deadly blight on all the graces of the Spirit. I fear for that young Christian, however clear and powerful has been his religious experience, who allows himself in dissipating thoughts, preferring the company of the gay and trifling, not to say the vulgar and obscene, to an hour in the prayer-meeting with the people of God. I am alarmed for those who would rather spend an evening with a novel, though written by a noted minister, than with the Book of Books, containing the thoughts of God. “How precious are thy thoughts unto me,” said the psalmist. He also said, “I thought on my

ways, and turned my feet unto thy testimonies." May we all do likewise, and find the blessing which came to him!

2. Again "our ways" or habits of life, so far as they fail to conform to the requirements of the Gospel, are to be overcome. The Gospel no more than the law gives us license to sin. And yet, how many professedly Christian people there are, who murmur, fret, and find fault with providential allotments, until the disease becomes chronic, and embitters all their lives. How many religiously inclined children have become discouraged by the peevishness and fretfulness of such parents. A scold is a curse to any household. I pity the young Christian whose home example and influence is not attractive, impressive, and encouraging. I have known such to wander away from duty and from God, and I have been made to weep in spirit, as I have learned that a professedly Christian father or mother had treated them unkindly or unjustly, not, it may be, intentionally or of malice, but by a simple yet sinful indulgence in the use of language which has pierced and grieved their tender spirits. As a Christian father as well as a Christian minister I do here and now express my unqualified protest against those "evil ways" of parents; beseeching all such by the love they have for the well-being of their own souls, and the souls of those God has intrusted to their care, to be prayer-

fully cautious of their example and influence over them. Parents! in a very important sense, we are to live again in the lives of our children. Many of our thoughts and words and actions are to be duplicated. With what force shall the thoughts come home to the hearts of real Christian's children, as they shall open the Bible, "This is the book our parents used to read;" or as they shall go into the house of the Lord, "Here is the place where father and mother used to sit and hear and sing and pray;" and when they shall hear the Lord's people speaking of his goodness, they shall call to mind the fact that father and mother used to do so too. Parents! shall it be thus that our children shall think of us, and what we did while here? Or shall they be compelled to think whenever they see the Bible, "That is the book father and mother seldom read;" as they spend their Sabbaths in visiting, "Father and mother used to do just so;" as they shall be asked to contribute to the Bible, Missionary, Tract, or Sunday-school cause, "Father never thought them worthy of support, and I will not support them." Whatever Christian parents would desire their children to become, they must strive to be. Whatever they see will be necessary for their children to overcome in order to be perfect Christians, they should overcome, that their children may have the encouragement of their example. If, then, our sinful thoughts and ways are to

be overcome we have enough to do. Yet let us not be discouraged, for there are abundant helps afforded. God calls no man to this warfare at his own charges. All the duties which the Gospel enjoins presupposes a gracious ability on the part of man to perform them. All who do really overcome, do so through faith and "the blood of the Lamb." "Christ strengthening us," we "can do all things," important or necessary. Now as wrong and wicked thoughts have very much to do in making us sinners, so right and pure thoughts have much to do in making us Christians. We must think right of the helps afforded us to overcome, or we shall not appreciate them to this purpose. Some think the death of Christ was only intended to manifest the love of God. It does this, and vastly more. It proclaims his hatred of sin, and that "without shedding of blood is no remission" of sin. It opens a door of hope to a world of captives groaning under the servitude of Satan, and furnishes them with ample means for their escape into the glorious "liberty of the sons of God." It brings to man, in his blindness, the revelations of an infinite Spirit; in his weakness, the help of one who is mighty; and, in his sin and pollution, the cheering assurance, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father." It makes a throne of grace accessible, and brings to our hearts an influence which inclines us to come boldly to it,

"that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need." We may therefore hope to overcome. Timorous, feeble, trembling one! are you here to-day? Think of the garden and of the cross, and of the God-man there! Think of him in his agony, his death, and resurrection. Think of him in his intercessions, his occupancy of the mediatorial throne, and in the travail of his soul for the final and full salvation of the lost!

Think of Jesus and dismiss your doubts and fears, and let your trembling cease. Remember that Jesus, in conquering his enemies, conquered for Christians also; and that it is an apprehension of this great truth which shall enable you to triumph gloriously. Would Christians, as often as they feel sin in their hearts, or discover it in their thoughts and actions, say, "I am set to overcome it; I must, I will, I shall, obtain the victory over it." How God would help them! How the Holy Spirit would comfort them! and how strong would they soon become! Dear brethren, how long shall we allow ourselves to be brought into bondage, while a mightier than our foe is ready to hide us in his pavilion? How often shall we lament our weakness when we might be

"Strong in the strength which God supplies  
Through his eternal Son."

Brethren! how many shall utterly perish for the want of a full-grown Christian manhood, to take

hold of them and bear them to Jesus? May God save us from being ashamed to ask for help, while we so much need it, and breathe into our souls the spirit of Christian heroism! O, let us on to the battle against all sin! The voice of God summons to the conflict! Heeding it as we may and should, the issue is no longer doubtful, we shall at last "overcome!" And what then? "He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son." Let us therefore briefly consider,

3. The good promised to the successful. This shall consist in (1) the inheritance of all things. But how is that or such a thing possible? We will try to make it plain to you. In taking my place at the top of the observatory on Mount Hope, the city of Rochester, including its numerous churches, its many costly buildings and palatial residences, was clearly seen by each and enjoyed by all. Thus was it in respect to all the objects of interest in that very interesting locality. The Brighton and other extensive nurseries; orchardings, corn, and meadow lands; pastures, with flocks in them, grazing in peace and loveliness; the river, margined on the west by the railway, and on the east by shrubbery of richest foliage; the falls, from the foot of which the waters of the Genesee gently glide into the broad Ontario; and even a portion of that inland ocean, with its heaving bosom and its snow-white sails, was seen and enjoyed by all.

Take another illustration: The sunlight. It is free, and is as abundant for you and me as if ours were the only eyes to be illuminated by it. Were there a billion of eyes where there is now but one, I should still have all the light I needed, or could use; and a thing of beauty and of joy to me might be the same to all other beholders. Thus, though there be "an innumerable company" who shall overcome, yet each "shall inherit all things." But (2) the relation that Christ shall hold to them, and they to him, shall be the chief good which shall come to them. "I will be his God, and he shall be my son." Some self-styled Christians in this world are reluctant, nay, utterly refuse, to own Christ to be their God; but should any of them be so fortunate as to "overcome" and get to heaven, they will be right glad to acknowledge him to be such there. I once thought of him only as a man, but it was not until I had learned to think of him as "God manifest in the flesh" that I could trust my soul to his care and guidance. "And he shall be my son." "And if a son," says the apostle, "then an heir." Heirship depends on sonship. Only sons of God can be heirs of God, "and inherit all things." If a son of God, I shall not only be honorably connected, but I shall be incalculably rich and powerful and happy for ever and ever.

## RELATIVE DUTIES OF THE CHURCH AND MINISTRY.

"Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord."—1 COR. xvi, 10.

THE institution of the Church and of the ministry are of divine appointment. In their harmonious co-operation they are a moral power in the earth, and were *intended* to be. Each has relative duties. The ministry has claims upon the Church, while *the world* has claims upon both. If the Church disregard her obligations to the ministry, or the ministry neglect its obligations to the Church, the well-being of the world, which they are both bound to promote, must necessarily suffer, and the loss and ruin of souls must be the terrible result. Hence, the study of their relative duties—a knowledge of their respective obligations—must conspire to render efficient their combinedly benevolent efforts for the salvation of the race.

Let us, then, first consider the relative duties of the ministry.

1. It is the duty of the ministry to "preach the word;" that is, to enunciate truth, to proclaim Jesus. To do this ministers are not at liberty to consult their own ease, or their own worldly advantage,

but are to give themselves so much, so fully, to the work, that wherever God in his providence may assign them fields of labor, they will be ready and willing to go. Christ's ministers never say, "I must preach to a people of my own choosing, or I will not preach at all." They rather say, because they feel, "Necessity is laid upon me, and I consider it a great honor to preach such a Gospel to *any* people." If those to whom they "come" are not what they could desire them to be, they know that the grand remedy for a wrong is hidden in the Gospel, and that as they explore it they will be the better furnished with the means to apply the corrections till they shall be permitted to rejoice in the work of their own hands. How frequently has this been the case during the history of an itinerant ministry? I remember, for it was but a few years ago, of going to a charge whence the brother who preceded me had been removed at the close of his first year. The people whom he had served that year loved him and he loved them. They had labored together in harmony and quiet, and a large number had been converted. But the providence of God seemed to indicate that he should go to the old Burlington Charge. At first he was reluctant, nay almost determined not to go. I remember hearing him tell how little he thought of the judgment of those who had acted in the matter, as also of saying to the good brother, "Go and do

your duty, and at the close of one year you will wish to stay another, the people will wish you to stay, and the result will be God will greatly bless you, and make you an instrument of great good to that people.” He went to the charge, was returned the second year, was instrumental in erecting one of the best churches in northern Pennsylvania, and was permitted to witness a powerful work of grace among the people. Six years after he left Burlington we were appointed there, and, during the two years of our stay there, the remark was made by many, “ You are the only minister who has called on us since Brother Nichols was on the charge.” God bless him and his earnest labors for ever and ever!

2. It is the duty of the ministry to give the Church a good example. In 1 Tim. iv, 12 their duty in this regard is very clearly expressed: “ But be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation, in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.” “ O my soul!” “ Who is sufficient for these things?” To be an example “ in word,” what study and discretion are necessary? To be an example “ in conversation,” what watchfulness and self-possession are demanded? To be an example “ in charity,” how considerate, how mindful of others’ infirmities must the minister be? To be an example “ in spirit” how rigid must he be in the discipline of his own temper? To be an example “ in faith ” how frequently must his own be

increased and strengthened? And, to be an example “in purity,” how great and constant must be his self-denial!

“ ‘Tis not a cause of small import  
The pastor’s care demands;  
But what might fill an angel’s heart,  
And filled a Saviour’s hands.”

How appropriate is the exhortation of the apostle: “Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee.” A sad day will it be for the Church when the many of her members, like the few already, shall care but little for the mental or the moral status of her ministry. Her ministry should not only be men of clean hands and of pure hearts, but also of vigorous thought, and who “study to show themselves approved,” and whose “profiting shall appear” unto all. The logic of the world must be met with the logic of the word of God, set on fire by the Holy Ghost; its philosophy must be met with the philosophy of truth, scintillating with love for souls, which are ready to perish; its skepticism must be overthrown by living specimens of a Gospel which “is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.” And the wickedness and the pollution of human society must be removed by the efforts of minds which have been baptized at the cross, having studied both God and

man. The general diffusion of knowledge—the multiplication of facilities of an educational character, and the vast and wonderful improvements in the arts, all conspire to the production of a demand for mental culture, of profound research, and of intellectual possessions on the part of the ministry, equal, at least, to any class of men in existence. And the man or the men in the Church who can be satisfied with a ministry barren of thought, but abundant in verbosity, can have no appreciable idea of the country in which they live, nor of the interests involved in its ministrations.

3. It is the duty of the ministry to serve the Church. St. Paul must be good authority in this matter. He says, “We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake.” But the question is raised at this point, “Who is to be the judge as to how the ministry is to serve her?” Shall the Church say, “You must serve us thus and thus, or you shall not serve us at all?” or shall the ministry decide the matter for itself? Evidently the ministry, for it is not for the sake of the Church, nor for its own sake, that it serves her, but for “Christ’s sake” that it does it, “and yourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake.” It is his kingdom the ministry is laboring to spread, it is his glory that it is trying to promote, and it is his powerful, spiritual presence which insures its suc-

cess. God made the sun to enlighten our world. It is a beneficent arrangement, a wonderful convenience, and men so regard it. Now, what would be thought of a clique or society of men who should undertake to dictate how and when and where the sun should shine? Would they not be regarded as being out of their place, at least the width of creation? In what esteem, then, must men in the Church be held who are ever arrogating to themselves the right to dictate to the ministry how and when and where it shall serve the Church. The ministry, like the sun, is a good thing, a great convenience; and, as it depends on God for direction and for power to do his work, and as it is amenable to him for the manner in which it is done, the responsibility should be left where he has placed it. God made the Church by the ministry, and then gave the ministry to the Church to serve her. Not all the gifts nor all the qualifications of the ministry are found in any one minister, but are diffused through the body—the many, and, if a desirable gift or qualification be wanting in one, it may be found in another. Thus, by the itinerant, or original system of supplying the Church, it may have the benefit of the service of every gift, of every qualification.

Let us now consider, secondly, the relative duties of the Church. These are indicated in the text: “Now if Timotheus come, see that he may be with

you without fear: for he worketh the work of the Lord."

1. The Church, in a large degree, is responsible for an audience for the minister. The novelty may secure him a good audience for a few Sabbaths, but the continuance of such a one may frequently depend on the Church itself. The dislikes of the members of the Church, as it respects the matter or the manner of the minister's pulpit labors, expressed in the presence of their children and of their friends, often results in keeping them away from the house of God, and in preventing the minister doing them any good.

Their frequent absence, also, from his ministrations, though they say nothing against him or his labors, has a voice which speaks and virtually says to children and friends, "We do not think it worth while to go and hear such a minister;" and the conclusion with these is, "We think so, too, and so we will not go to church." "Now," brethren, "if Timotheus come, see that he may be with you without fear" of not having a good audience so far as your speech and example goes. Some ministers will command a good audience, though both these are against them; and I would here respectfully ask, Can you safely cut yourselves off from the influence of such ministers? For my own part, I should certainly suspect my own taste in such a case, and would resolve to help make the

audience a good one, till I had learned to love what the rest did, and then I would continue as a matter of course.

It is not to be expected that one minister will suit or please every body. Because I am not pleased with the pastor, it illy becomes me as a member of the Church to find fault and stay away from the house of God, and thus throw my influence against the public good. A certain member of the Church, in a letter to *The Christian Advocate*, once said: "It so happened that one minister whom I thought the least of, of all the ministers who ever preached in our place, was made the instrument in the hands of God in the conversion of two of my children." He had paid that minister as much as he had any other minister, had heard him as constantly, and had spoken of him as kindly. God only knows how many members there are in the Churches of this land who have unconverted sons and daughters, chiefly for the reason that a different course has been pursued by their parents. I fear for such when I think of their meeting those children and those ministers at the bar of God. O Father, set thy people right at this point!

The Church should see that the minister be "without fear" of want. He should be made to feel at once that he is to have a generous support. Not barely sufficient to enable him to live, but to live

comfortably, and the while, with economy, to lay by something for the days of sickness and the infirmities of age. There is probably no one thing which so cripples the influence of the ministry as a penurious spirit manifested on the part of the Church in its support. Some have peculiar ways and entertain peculiar views respecting the support of the ministry. When solicited to contribute something for this purpose they say, "If the minister visits us we will give him something; please tell him so." Now, I would like to know just what it were right to think of such men. If the minister visits them, it is understood, of course, that he does so for the sake of getting a morsel; and if he does not visit them, they not unfrequently charge him with the sin of feeling himself above them. The support of the ministry should never depend on the caprice of such men, and, it is fortunate that such are a minority in almost all communities. God has ordained that "they that preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel," and that "the laborer is worthy of his hire." But there is another class who say, "We will pay nothing toward the support of the minister, for we do not like his sermons." He either preaches too long or too short, too loud or too low. Others say, "We will give nothing, for it is always the same thing over and over; why don't he study and try to inform himself, and keep up with the times, and give us something

new?" While others say, "We will not do much, if any thing, for he preaches from notes, or writes and reads his sermons, and I do not believe in a minister's doing the one or the other; if God has called him to preach, let him trust in God to give him something to say on Sundays, and let him work on week-days as we do." Need I enter into an argument to convince you that religion enough to save such men in a dying hour would most certainly save them from entertaining such notions. Every member of the Church should do something toward the support of the Gospel, not because they are pleased with the man or the men who preach it, or with the manner in which it is preached, but from principle and for the public good. What must be thought of a man who, once a week, from year to year, should call on a neighbor just at meal-time and eat with him, and yet never invite the neighbor to come and eat in return? and who should absolutely refuse to give any one a meal when asked to do so? Must he not be thought to be a sponger, and a very mean one at that? And yet there are men who belong to the Church, and who regularly hear the Gospel, that never give any thing proportionate to their ability toward its support, and who seem to think that churches can be built, and kept clean and warm, and the minister and his family be well cared for, without their having any responsibility in the matter, only to

be in as comfortable a seat as there is in the church every Sabbath. Every public good costs somebody something, and I trust there are very few who will envy the man who acts on the principle "others will do if I do not." Brethren, resolve that if "Timotheus come, that he may be with you without fear" of a support. You will thereby be very much more likely to profit by his ministrations, and be much more able to respect yourselves.

It is also the duty of the Church to co-operate with the minister "in the work of the Lord." Personal effort on the part of every member of the Church in connection with the personal efforts of the ministry would constitute a net-work of influences which would gather thousands into the fold of Christ, where there are not brought hundreds now. I have been led to this conclusion; nay, it has been forced upon my mind by the reluctance manifested on the part of numerous professedly religious parents to co-operate with the ministry in its efforts to bring their relatives and children to Christ. How often, in conversing with their unconverted ones, has the faithful pastor become acquainted with the fact that neither father nor mother, brother nor sister has ever seriously and affectionately besought them to give their hearts to Jesus? Brethren, can it be that you are saved, as you should be, if you have not the grace which makes it a pleasure to you to tell sinners

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—your own children—of an all-saving Jesus? and to urge them, at least, with as much zeal as does the stranger minister, to embrace him as their only hope? There is a false and destructive delicacy at this point which should be put to death, for, unless it is, you will be called upon to see your children and friends die without hope; and the awful thought will go thundering through your souls, “These might have been saved had we but co-operated with those who were trying to do them good.” Brethren, remember the past. Were you left entirely to the efforts of the ministry? Nay, were not many of you brought into the light of salvation by the personal efforts of the laity? How often you have thought, “but for what some private members of the Church had done we should never have found the Lord!” And has not the injunction, “Go thou and do likewise,” as often come with force to your souls? And did it not come to be obeyed? Evidently for that purpose did it come, and did you obey it? If truth compels you to answer no, are you not ready now to say, “God helping me, I will?” O that the blessed Spirit may help you to form and execute this high and just resolve! Dear brethren, let “Timotheus,” whoever he may be, be with you without fear of lacking your willing and earnest co-operation, “for he worketh the work of the Lord.” Surely, brethren, it will be an honor to you to have your heads

and hearts employed in such a work. God will make you happy in it, and many shall pronounce you blessed. Your dying day shall be your happiest, and you shall be remembered by those who survive you, as honored instruments in the hands of God, in turning others "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God."

"As laborers in thy vineyard  
Send us, O Christ, to be  
Content to bear the burden  
Of weary days for thee;  
We ask no other wages,  
When thou shalt call us home,  
But to have shared the travail  
Which makes thy kingdom come."

## GOD OUR FATHER.

“Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.”—2 COR. vi, 17, 18.

THE relation expressed in the term, “A Father unto you,” is one of the most dear and interesting known to men. Father!—what visions of the past throng our minds upon the simple utterance of the time-honored title? Swift-winged thought, or the reverse movements of the mental enginery within, bear us back to the interesting past; and we see again what we then saw, and hear again what we then heard. We seem to see again a father’s form and features, his beaming eye, his ruddy cheek, his noble brow, and winning smile which drew us to his knee. We seem to hear again his cheerful song, as he goes forth to earn the daily bread for us dependent ones; and the pleasure-giving sounds of his manly footsteps, as he nears the dear old home at eve. We hear again the household words, “Father’s coming!” And then we seem to see ourselves again, as with joyous bound we hasten out to meet and greet him. Others of us, and not a few, hear the word, father, with vastly different reflections. We hear it,

and at once think of him as he was when sickness had taken the strength out of his noble frame, when age had touched his brow with care and his locks with frost, when he leans upon his staff and the fire has grown dim in his eye, and when “the keepers of the house all tremble, and the wheel is broken at the cistern, and the pitcher is broken at the fountain”—we see, alas! alas! we see him dead; and the awful thought—the crushing truth runs through the family—father’s gone! Father is dead!! Is not the relation of father a dear and deeply interesting one? When destroyed, is there not a wound which earth can never heal—a sorrow which it can never cure? O how sad and deep the gloom which settles down on childhood bereaved of a father! How do such appeal to all the humanity that is within us! We have only to learn that a little girl or boy is fatherless to be drawn toward them, or prompted to speak a word or to perform an act which shall draw them to ourselves. How involuntarily does a “God bless you!” come to our lips as we meet the fatherless ones. And although some of these are perverse and mean and wicked, yet, in spite of ourselves, we are charitable in our feelings toward them. We think of them with solicitude, we are apt to speak to them in a kinder tone than we are wont to speak to others.

A beautiful ship at sea, bearing a precious cargo, without rudder or pilot, left to the sport of the winds

and waves, to hidden reefs and fearful maelstroms, excites within us feelings of pity and of sorrow, but a child without a father's guiding hand and voice and judgment—adrift on the sea of time, exposed to influences which lure to ruin, to examples which grow from sinful habits, and to temptations which have their birth in the hot-beds of the devil—is vastly more an object of yearning pity and of soul-solicitude. I charge and beseech you, Christian brethren and friends, to give unto all such whom you shall meet, at least, the benefit of a kind word and a warm God bless you! You who have children know not how soon they may be fatherless. As you would have others befriend and care for them in such an event, do you be sure to befriend and care for others. But we had intended to notice,

*The duties which the relation of father imposes;* and, therefore, to this point we now invite your attention. The duties of a father may be expressed under one general head, namely, *Provision for the wants of his children.* The wants of children are various, but among their first wants are food and clothing. A healthy, generous diet, and clean, comfortable clothing are chief among the first wants of children. These the father is expected to provide. He that provideth not for his own household has denied the faith and is worse than an infidel. We involuntarily shun the man who, to gratify a de-

praved appetite for tobacco or for strong drink, consumes in its indulgence what should go toward feeding and clothing his children more comfortably ; and we hope to see the time when money taken from such fathers, for such a selfish and debasing purpose, will have to be refunded to their children, with the costs of prosecution. Few, if any, but those who either wish to sell or use the infernal stuff will ever oppose such a law ; and in the good time coming, when the good and the honest shall lead, instead of being led, as is now the case, this robbing from childhood and youth shall be punished as it deserves to be.

But children need educating ; it is therefore the duty of the father to furnish the means and to give opportunity to acquire an education. If it be true that "communities of ignorance are communities of vice," it follows by natural sequence that families of ignorance are families of vice, for communities are but families multiplied. The production in the minds of children of a desire for learning should be among the first efforts of all fathers. The usefulness for which education qualifies men, the sources of happiness which it opens up before them, the rich and varied means with which it furnishes men to act well their part amid the stirring and important events of human life, may each and all be urged as motives to acquire the largest fund of human knowledge. To

rear a child in ignorance in a land of colleges and free schools, must be an act of injustice both to the child and the State. Extraordinaries excepted, most fathers in this country could, if they would, beget in the minds of their children a fixed purpose to become thoroughly educated—a purpose that would strengthen with their years, and aid them much in acquiring valuable possessions in the realms of science, despite poverty and all the ordinary difficulties which lie in the path of success. How commanding the incentives for fathers to aid in the formation and execution of such a purpose? The age in which they live, the stirring events which come rushing on, the prospects of success, the facilities for communication or transmission of thought, the brightening glorious destiny which opens before us as a people, the interesting and important relation that we hold to every segment of the world, all, all have a voice to incite the fathers in this generation to help their children to the most liberal education—to become largely intelligent. It is also the duty of fathers to do what they can to prepare their children *for the very best society*. Such society in this world is that of the most pure and elevated thought, the most refined and virtuous feeling, the noblest and holiest aims, and of the most rational scriptural pleasures. Preparation for such society necessarily involves obedience to rightful authority, a knowledge of all just claims,

respect for superiors, and a disposition tempered with kindness to hold to the right, the pure, and the good with the tenacity of life. To start children with such a moral and mental furnishing will require “precept upon precept, precept upon precept,” constantly urged upon their attention by the force of a living example. But are you ready to inquire, “What has this to do with the text?” Much every way, chiefly, however, because in it, “the Lord Almighty” proposes to be “a Father unto” us; and, consequently, holds himself ready to meet the obligations which that relation imposes.

Blessed be his name! How kind it is in him to make the proposition! He sees our souls all naked and starving, and says, “I will be a Father unto you.” If so, he will clothe us with the garment of salvation, the spotless robe of Christ’s righteousness, made ours by faith. He will also feed us with the “hidden manna,” the bread of heaven. If a “Father,” then he will educate us, teaching us “wondrous things out of his law,” so that we shall feel to say with one of his ancient pupils, “O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!” and, like him also, be able to reckon “all things loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.”

If “a Father unto” us, he will prepare us for the best society. *The best!* O what is the best on

earth when compared to that other best—the best in heaven? Some of that society have always been good—that portion made up of the angels and those from the households of earth, who went to the bright spirit-land in infancy; and the rest of the company consists of those who, though once sinners, have been washed by the “washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.” Now, to be prepared for such society, man must have more than the help of man—“Omnipotence must lend its aid or all is lost;” but, if God is a Father unto us, the help of Omnipotence is ours, and we shall succeed. How is it, then, that he will be a Father unto us? It is on condition that we “come out from among them, and be separate, . . . and touch not the unclean thing.” This done, he says, “I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you.” How definite is this instruction; how reasonable the condition! “Come out from among them”—the workers of iniquity—“and be ye separate,” join the family of God, the Church of Christ, and walk no longer in the ways of sin with sinners, and “touch not the unclean thing,” have nothing to do with that which is wrong—it is unclean, and will pollute and defile you. Do this, all this, just this, “and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” What motives, and what reward! Received of the Lord Almighty. O

ye who are strangers to God by wicked works, and have joined hands with his enemies, he now in kindness offers to receive you—to adopt you, and be a Father unto you.

Would some one of large wealth and great benevolence make such a proposal to some of the fatherless ones, who are multiplying in every community, how eagerly would they comply with any reasonable condition! And how wise and happy they would be in doing so. You, my fellow-man and fellow-sinner, are in greater need of a heavenly Father's care. Your soul needs that Father's house to live in when "the earthly house of this tabernacle shall be dissolved." A house and home eternal. The dear and interesting relation of father, in this world, cannot last long at the longest. Fathers die in this world, and children, too, die—die despite all that fathers can do to prevent it—and fathers die despite all that children can do to prevent it—but he who has God for a Father need never lose him. He will, if they obediently will it to be so, be their Father forever. Are not some here to-day who once felt that God was their Father, but who feel so no longer? Those who have scattered their ways to strangers left their Father, and have wandered far from home. Was he not kind unto you? Did he not follow you a great way, and seek to bring you back? What caused you to leave him? How could you treat your Father so?

But I will not press this now, for I have something far more agreeable to say. It is this: He is still willing to be your Father. The change is not in him, but in yourselves. He waits your return; yea, invites it. He says, "Return unto me, and I will return unto you." Come, O come back to "our Father." He is kind and good; he is rich and powerful. Children share the inheritance of their fathers. If you will comply with the conditions expressed in the text, if you will have God for your Father on those terms, he will "give you grace and glory," and withhold no good thing from you. Come, sinner, and let him receive you; come, and let your Father bless you. Come "out from among them"—the vile, the polluting ones—and he will give you the best society there is on earth in which to mingle while here, and, when you go hence, he will let you in among the angels, where you may

"Sweep a harp of wondrous song"

with glory on your brow forever. Fully confide in God as your Father, and he will yet lift you up to his home and his heart in heaven.

In the light of this subject, we think that it must be clear to every mind, that it is according to the will of God that all those who would live a Christian life separate themselves from the world by joining some branch of the general Church.

The question is not, May I not live a Christian life out of the Church? But it is rather this, "If God instituted the Church, with its ordinances, do not I call in question his wisdom and his goodness in keeping out of the Church, and neglecting his ordinances?"

It is as clearly the duty of unbaptized believers to receive the ordinance of baptism, as it is for them to pray, to read God's word, or to wait on him in the sanctuary, by reverently listening to the preaching of his everlasting Gospel; and it is equally the duty of all penitent believers to commemorate the death of Christ in partaking of the Lord's Supper—the holy Eucharist. Now, as God has placed these in the Church, and not out of the Church, it follows that all true believers should belong to some religious body where these are administered.

The Church is God's family on earth, and though some of the children in this family act like any thing else but children, or as children should, yet in this family there are those who reverence and greatly respect the Father, and believe his government to be the very best, and the most adapted to the intelligent happiness of all the family. Indeed, I believe no fault has ever been found with this family of God by any of its members but those who have so lived as to be a disgrace and a dishonor to it. The good and worthy members have so much to do to keep them-

selves right that they can hardly afford to spend much time in looking up the faults of others.

The doors of the house in which this Church-family live are always open, so that if any go in, and do not wish to remain, they are not kept by constraint, the door is open, and they can depart in peace. Who, then, will not come out from among the workers of iniquity? Who that will not come into the family of God? I know that it will cost you a high resolve to break away from the wicked and filthy associations in which you have mingled so long, but I know that it is your only hope to do so. O how tight the fetters of habit are being fastened to you! God help you to break them while you may, and to begin now!

“Now God invites, how blest the day!  
How sweet the Gospel’s charming sound!  
Come sinners, haste! O haste away,  
While yet a pardoning God is found.”

### ACQUAINTANCE WITH GOD.

"For some have not the knowledge of God: I speak this to your shame."—1 Cor. xv, 34.

ONE type of infidelity rejects the idea of the existence of a God, and claims that all things come, continue, and go by chance. Another type claims that matter is God, and that God is matter, and that there is no revelation of God but by matter. A third type profess to believe in the existence of such a God as the Bible reveals, and that the Bible is what it assumes to be, a revelation of God's will to man, but in practice, in life, act as if there is no God. In reply to those who represent the first type we have only to say that the idea of a self-existing, all-wise, and all-powerful God is co-extensive with the race, and that it devolves on them to explain with *whom*, and *when*, and *where* this sublime and granite idea originated. In reply to those representing the second type, we remark that their idea of God contradicts man's consciousness; for, according to their teaching, man is but matter, and yet this man-matter sees and hears and tastes and smells and feels that he is not God, nor any part of him. Now if man, who is the most wonderful specimen of organized matter on the face of the earth,

rejects by his consciousness the theory that matter is God and God is matter, the testimony in support of said theory, drawn from all other sources, must be feeble indeed. This notion is also seen to be wide of the truth, in that He who spake as "never man spake" declares, "God is a spirit." I know that those who represent this type of infidelity ridicule the Bible account of the conception, birth, and character of the man "Christ Jesus," for they have, doubtless, found it was very much easier to do so than it was to overthrow the account by sound argument; but the testimony of profane as well as of sacred history declares him to have been a credible witness, far beyond the possibility of impeachment. Moreover, it devolves on them to prove that God is not a spirit, and that he is matter, neither of which have they ever done nor are at all likely to do.

Respecting those who comprise the third type, and of whom there are many in every community, we remark that, having embraced in theory the Bible account of the existence, will, and character of God, they must incur immeasurable guilt by living as if there were no God. Will it surprise or offend you, who are unrepenting and disobedient, if we say, what we fully believe, that you are of this class or type! Let us see. Should I come to you personally and ask if you believed in the God of the Bible, in that "book" as a revelation from him to men, and that

he had designed to let you and all men know what was his will by that "book," you would doubtless answer, "I certainly do." And yet, how have you lived? How are you now living? When have you thought of God with real sorrow that you had not thought more of him? When have you really sought to praise him? When have you prayed unto him? When? Did you ever humble yourself before him, thus confessing him to be greater than yourself? Did you ever confide in him, and thereby acknowledge him to be worthy of your confidence? Did you ever, ever do one thing because he required it, and for the express purpose of honoring him; and if so, can you remember what it was? Please do not secretly accuse me of being too inquisitive, nor "account me your enemy if I tell you the truth." You profess to believe in God, in the Bible, that it is a revelation of his will to men; and if to men, to you; and if to you, how vast and constant the obligation that is upon you to love God and obey him! This in theory you acknowledge, while in practice you say, "There is no God," and therefore no revelation of his will, and that you are without responsibility. Are you not, then, of the class who are without "a knowledge of God?" Especially without that knowledge of him that exerts a controlling influence on your life? What, then, is that knowledge of God of which the text asserts some to be ignorant?

1. It is not that knowledge of him, derivable only from his works. For though it be true that “the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork,” yet, as these have no voice to proclaim either his justice, holiness, goodness, or love, they cannot be of service to men in teaching them to love and obey him, or to produce within them the feeling that he is “Our Father!” To know God only, as to his almighty and terrible majesty, is to have the feeling of fear and awe excited within us. Only to have such knowledge of him is to tremble at the noise of his footsteps, and to “exceedingly fear and quake” at the thunders with which he shakes the continents. To behold him only in the aspect of an avenger, as the great arbiter of the nations, tossing them against each other in deadly conflict, sending forth famine and pestilence as instruments of his wrath, and as terrible ministers of his government, is to have begotten in us the inquiry, “Whither shall I flee from thy presence?” Yet this is the sum of the knowledge most wicked men have of God. The knowledge of him, of which the text declares some to be ignorant, cannot be obtained by the hearing of the ear, nor by the sight of the eye, for it comes, if it comes at all, by the Spirit’s taking of the things of God and showing them to the souls of men. When this is done the person knows God aright, and this knowledge is eternal life to him.

The soul, thus possessed, still knows and beholds God, great in majesty and wonderful in working, but also sees and knows him in the milder aspect of benefactor and redeemer. God is still known as the omnipotent One, but as employing the almighty energies of his grace in the restoration of man to the power he had utterly forfeited, and to the endless heaven for which, in some sense, his immortality adapts him. The soul now sees in him a God of goodness and of love, an almighty and never-changing friend. It knows him, and in spirit has converse and communion with him, confiding interests to his keeping that are more valuable than globes of gold or a universe of silver. How sweetly, trustingly she sings,

“Jesus, my God! I know his name;  
His name is all my trust;  
Nor will he put my soul to shame,  
Nor let my hope be lost.”

Why, then, is it a shame that there are some among you who have not this knowledge of God? Doubtless mistaken views of the specific mission God intends his people to fill is one reason. They are designed to be “the salt of the earth,” and “the light of the world.” And yet it is to be feared that a large majority of the local Churches, and consequently of the membership of the general Church, have no set purpose to live or to labor for the

salvation of the lost. To remedy this defect, or to supply this want of personal effort and sense of responsibility on the part of the membership, laborers from abroad are sought, through whose labors, in the name of God and the spirit of the Master souls are awakened and converted ; but the full fruit is never gathered and secured to the cause of Christ, because only the minority of the members were “workers together with God,” and with these servants of his. The converts joining the Church soon find that there are comparatively few who are well prepared to lead and feed them, to give wise counsel, and to offer needed assistance, and in a short time a large proportion of these are in spirit and formality with those who had little to do in bringing them into the kingdom.

As a rule, those only who are born to the Church through her painful labors and travail will hold to her as their mother, and in turn will take hold of the hearts of wicked men, and by the prayer of faith and labor of love bring them to the excellent knowledge of “Christ Jesus, the Lord.” That religious society or body rests upon the most permanent foundation, and will accomplish the most good in the world, which is most successful in inculcating a sense of individual responsibility among its members. God evidently intends his Church to be aggressive. It should, therefore, be made up of progressive men

and women ; and not of those which an occasional new idea nearly kills, but the rather of those who “grow in grace,” and let their “light shine before men,” and who are “going on to perfection.”

“Some have not the knowledge of God : I speak this to your shame.” O, brethren, let us each open our heart to take in this language, and to revolve its searching significance. Let us each ask himself the questions, What am I doing to make men acquainted with God ? What to bring them to know Jesus Christ and the power of his resurrection ? Is it not a shame to us that some of our families and many of our acquaintances do not yet know God ? True, some of these may not be in wickedness what they might have been but for our counsels and our prayers, but how few of them have been drawn to Jesus’ feet, as was Mary ; or to his loving heart, as was John ? Christianity is designed to bless the world with light and love. Has it shone into your heart, brother, and made you happy ? Do not hide it, but by the purity of your life, by the happiness of your spirit, seek to commend it to others as worthy of their heartiest acceptance. Not a single week should be allowed to pass, where there is a religious society, without some one or more being brought to know God in his forgiving mercy by its earnest united Christian effort and influence. How such a condition of the Church would obviate the necessity for

camp-meetings, and effectually roll off from the Church the reproach connected with her spasmodic or periodical efforts to bring men to God? When I think of the ability of the feeblest members of the Church to banter in trade, to contend for cherished opinions in political matters, and to manufacture and circulate gossip, I am sure they could, if they would, become efficient workers in the cultivation of almost any Gospel field, and successful instruments in winning souls for Christ.

Allow me to utter a direct and personal question just here. It is this: Have you ever enjoyed the luxury of bringing a soul to God? Do you covet such enjoyment? Let me assure you that it is lawful for you to do so. Come, then, and come now, and consecrate yourself, soul and body, to this blessed work. Devils are out after souls. Should not all Christians be? O let us each to-day begin a life-long effort to rob them of their prey! Here, and now, amid these hallowed associations and sanctified friendships, where ascends the fervent prayer and the song of praise, just here and now, give yourselves anew to God and forever. Thou cleansing, inspiring, and sealing Spirit, come upon us, that we may evermore labor to bring men to know God, "whom to know aright is eternal life!" Brother sinner, did you never think that it is because you know so little of God that you love him so little? If you were

as well acquainted with him as you might be, you would “be at peace with him.” It is your ignorance of God, as the Saviour of ruined men, that must furnish any apology for your misery in time or in eternity.

“ My Redeemer to know, to feel his blood flow,  
This is life everlasting—’tis heaven below.”

“ If all the world my Jesus knew,  
Then all the world would love him too.”

Sinner, you may know Him, and if you seek you shall find him; and to you, as well as to all his servants in the past and the present, he shall be the one who is “altogether lovely,” and “the chiefest among ten thousand.” Please do not any longer neglect attention to the interests of your souls because some in the Church ignore all responsibility respecting your salvation; but remember that you must each know God for yourself, and stand, as if alone, before him in the judgment. When I think that I must give account there as to how I have preached to you and warned you, I would, if I could, prevent your looking at the miserable inconsistencies of mere professors of religion, at least long enough to “look unto Jesus” and be saved. As you cherish the memory of the good that have died; as you sigh for a peace you have never known; as you desire the smile and the kiss of

God in the final struggle ; and as you would have him acknowledge you to be his when he comes to make up his jewels, begin this day to say, "Let me know thee, O God, in thy mercy, that I may never know thee in thy wrath !"

"Come to Calvary's holy mountain,  
Sinners ruined by the fall ;  
Here a pure and healing fountain  
Flows to you, to me, to all,  
In a full perpetual tide,  
Opened when our Saviour died.

"Come, in sorrow and contrition,  
Wounded, impotent, and blind ;  
Here the guilty, free remission,  
Here the lost a refuge find.  
Health, this fountain will restore ;  
He that drinks need thirst no more.

"Come, ye dying, live forever ;  
'Tis a soul-reviving flood ;  
God is faithful ; he will never  
Break his cov'nant sealed in blood ;  
Signed when our Redeemer died,  
Sealed when he was glorified."

## THE RIGHT DIRECTION OF THE HEART.

"And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God."

—2 THESS. iii, 5.

WHAT simplicity of utterance is here, and yet how full of kindly sentiment, of superior wisdom, and of comprehensive Christian desires for those addressed! These are characteristics of St. Paul. His style is easy-flowing; simple, not complex; intelligible, not difficult of apprehension. He soars, but you do not see him making an effort to rise. He breathes great prayers for those he loves in Christ, yet does not seem to think of their greatness. He drops words of consolation and wisdom on their ears, but you never detect him in priding himself on the utterance of them. The secret of this is, he could not get low enough to do so. The attractions from above were too great for this. The love of God "absorbed him quite." Of this he thought; to this he would turn the attention of the world; into this he would have the hearts of believers directed.

The love of God, as a subject for consideration, as a matter of experience, and as a source of enjoyment, indicates the line of thought our mind shall take in the discussion of this interesting subject.

To consider the love of God, something more is meant than the bestowment of occasional thought. The benighted traveler has glanced upward, and, in doing so, has beheld stars of different magnitude, and he has thought, "It is fortunate for me that God has made and placed these brilliants in the heavens;" and he has passed on and reached his home in safety, no more to think of moon or stars until again benighted. Just so it is with many in regard to their considering the love of God.

An occasional thought, few and far between, men seem to regard as being a sufficient consideration of his love. But did the traveler alluded to consider the moon and stars? Was he prepared to do it then and there? If so, he must have previously mastered the science of astronomy, and had at hand and eye a powerful telescope; for without that knowledge and instrument of vision he might simply notice those orbs of light for an age, and still remain as ignorant of them as when he first began to look.

If, then, preparation is essential to a consideration of these works of God, much more must it be to a consideration of his love. God's Bible is the great text-book of the love of God; therefore, to consider this love, familiarity with the Scriptures is indispensable.

This, with faith as the spiritual telescope, possessed by men, and the love of God may be considered by

them with unfailing interest and with abounding joy.

And is not the love of God, as a subject for consideration, worthy of such preparation ? Or is it so insignificant a stream that its sound and flow may be swept at a single glance ? Nay, verily. It is a fountain whose “streams the whole creation reach ;” or, to change the figure, it is an illimitable sea, without a shore on which its waves shall never break.

As the most perfect and useful piece of mechanism must fail of being appreciated by the beholder, by reason of his ignorance of the mechanic arts, and of their contribution to national prosperity and greatness, so the love of God, the source of redemption lies beyond the vision, and consequent appreciation of those who search not the Scriptures, and who hide not the word of the Lord in their hearts.

If men would be directed into a consideration of the love of God, they must study his word, which reveals and declares it. There it may be seen embodied, developed, and diffused. There may be heard its heavenly breathings in exceeding great and precious promises ; and then they may learn what the love of God has done to bless and save them. O if you have any proper regard for your souls, and especially for their well-being in the endless hereafter toward which you are so rapidly tending, delay not another

day to begin a preparation for appropriately considering the love of God. It is true, that much and careful reading of the Bible, with a trustful, teachable spirit, is involved in a proper consideration of his love; but, if you will give yourself fully to the work, you will make wonderful discoveries in the love of God, at the sight of which your hearts shall thrill with pleasures not known by you before, and many shall hear you declare, "The half was never told me."

You should persevere in this work because of the peculiar blessings and privileges which the love of God secures to you. Angels, those beings of superior power and intelligence, sinned, "kept not their first estate," and abode not in the truth, and are "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day;" there is no longer given them a state of trial, nor the continued offer of a Saviour, nor is there now granted to them the enlightening and constraining influence of the Holy Spirit; but all of these are still given to men, by the love of God.

Were you sick, nigh unto death, or famishing for want of food, and should a benevolently disposed person supply you with a remedial agent, or with wholesome food, by which you should be saved from death, he would be sought out by you, and his acquaintance made, if possible. You would like to see

his form and features, and to become familiar with them. You would love to pour your thanks into his ears, and to do him many favors in return. The love of God has done infinitely more for you, and will you not consider it? May the love of God constrain you to do so, and thus lay an additional obligation upon you to consider that love!

But we pass to notice the love of God as a matter of experience.

And here we would be distinctly understood as teaching the utter inability of every thing but the Spirit of God to direct your hearts into the experience of his love. The Spirit only can take of the things of God, and so show them to men that they can experience them.

But the half-skeptical inquiry is made just here, “What do you mean by experiencing the love of God?” We answer: The possession of it—the possession of it by divine diffusion—it being “shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost given unto us.” This, we claim, may be known by the recipient—known as well, as positively, as he may know any thing by the testimony of his senses. He feels it—it makes him happy—it destroys the fear of death within him—it inspires him with hope—arms him against temptation—constrains him in his measure to do good unto others, and sets his soul all on fire with zeal for God’s glory, and for the salvation of all souls which

are lost in sin and error's night. O how wonderful is this love in the hearts of men! As the showers that water the earth in one locality are exhaled in imperceptible mists, and then collected in clouds which empty themselves on other thirsty sections, the supply kept equal to the demand by draught from the numerous bodies of water which dot the surface of the earth, so the love of God, experienced by his people, is borne along into all classes of human society, by their noiseless lives, professions of faith, hallowed songs, and shouts of triumph. Thus the love of God is self-diffusing and self-perpetuating. Every heart possessing it has a freshness, loveliness, beauty, and charm about it which attracts the beholder, and a voice out of that heart reaching his, says, O how lovingly! O how eloquently! "Come to this oasis; come, and be happy. Come, and that heart, which now beats time to the discord of hell, shall throb with unutterable joy to the harmony of heaven. Come, and though thy heart be allied to spirits fallen but never to be redeemed, it shall, by the love of God diffusedly infused, be in every thought renewed, and heaven shall henceforth be acknowledged as the place of thy nativity and as your eternal abode."

O thou blessed Holy Spirit, direct some hearts into the conscious experience of the love of God this very hour!

Closely allied to the love of God experienced is the love of God as the source of enjoyment. Yet there is a difference. The former is essential to the latter. To enjoy the love of God, we must first experience it. As men must first open their eyes to behold the glories of the rising sun, so the heart must first be renewed by love before we can enjoy it. For as a diseased or inflamed eye involuntarily shuns the light, so the heart in which the love of God is not "shed abroad" reciprocates not that love, and derives no pleasure from it. Perfect vision is essential to the enjoyment of perfect sunshine; thus a perfect heart, a heart perfected in love, glows and rejoices in the love of God.

We have heard persons speak of the "enjoyment of very poor health," but we never believed them, and we are equally unbelieving as to any one's enjoying the love of God who has no experience in it. Good health only is a source of enjoyment, thus is it respecting the love of God. Experienced, possessed by the soul, it thrills with ecstatic delights, and is the most intelligently happy thing in all the worlds that God has made. The body, the vehicle in which the soul is riding through probation, may be racked with pains and burned with fevers, and, by long continued disease become so shorn of its strength as to be unable to stand alone, and the soul the while be luxuriating in Elysian fields and rosy bowers or prom-

enading the golden streets of the eternal city, while ever and anon she listens to the gentle rustle of seraph's wings, or to the loud, loud anthems of the upper choir. Glory be to God for his love, which is at once the preparation and the source of such enjoyment!

These may be considered by some as exceedingly extravagant expressions, but let me assure such that they but very imperfectly convey an idea of what I myself experienced when, by wasting sickness, life and death were struggling for this house that I live in. O what waves from the sea of love rolled over my soul! And still they come. Glory be to God! Yes, still they come!

Brethren, what an interesting volume would the utterances of souls filled with the love of God constitute! It might be somewhat difficult reading it, but, then, it would be easy enough shouting it if we had the love of God to move our hearts and lips, and to fill our voices.

The love of God, as a source of enjoyment. How vast—how deep a sea is this! From it flows the stream of redemption, fringed on either side with the choicest flowers of promise—exotics from heaven.

Fellow-sinner, come to this stream. Come, and drink and live forever. Come, and be happy forever. Come believing, and “the Lord” will “direct

your heart into the love of God.” Come as you are, and come to-day, for the Master’s voice is most assuring :

“ With me, your chief, ye then shall know,  
Shall feel, your sins forgiven ;  
Anticipate your heaven below,  
And own that love in heaven.”

Conclusion—To experience the love of God we must consider it; and to enjoy it we must first experience it.

“ O for a lowly, contrite heart,  
Believing, true, and clean ;  
Which neither life nor death can part  
From Him that dwells within,—

“ A heart in every thought renew’d,  
And full of love divine ;  
Perfect, and right, and pure, and good,  
A copy, Lord, of thine.

“ Thy nature, gracious Lord, impart ;  
Come quickly from above ;  
Write thy new name upon my heart,—  
Thy new, best name of Love.”

## THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH AND MINISTRY.

"And he brought him to Jesus."—JOHN i, 42.

WHAT glorious surprises must the people have had who were favored with the visible presence of the Christ in his youth and mature manhood? His disputation with the doctors and lawyers in the temple at the age of twelve, the wonderful reply he made to his reputed parents when they chided him for the trouble he had given them on that occasion, and the frequent gleamings of the divinity which dwelt within him, must have awed and thrilled the beholders as nothing else had ever done. No marvel, then, when one discovered an attraction or an excellence in him, which he had not seen before, that he should desire to find "his own brother," or dear friend, that he might bring him where he might behold the same. It was thus with Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. "He first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus."

Now, this principle is not only an element in human nature, but is eminently an element in Christian nature. Whoever comes to Christ is so anxious

that others should, that they are willing to make especial effort to bring them to him ; and the question, “ How can this be the most successfully done ? ” is one of the greatest questions of this age. Bringing men to Jesus is the evident mission of both the Church and the ministry, for only as they do this are they “ workers together with God.” When, then, may it in truth be said that men are brought to Jesus ?

We answer :

1. Not when they have been merely brought to confess their sins, for many such still “ hold the truth in unrighteousness ;” that is, they both know and confess the right, “ yet still the wrong pursue.” Instance those who confess that they ought to speak to sinners to “ come over on the Lord’s side,” but never do so, and who are ever ready to acknowledge any wrong, but never ready to do the right. “ These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.”

2. Bringing men to Jesus means something more than getting them to subscribe to any creed, however orthodox. If all who have been brought into the different orthodox Churches of this land had as certainly been brought to Christ, the moral sense and public opinion of this country would ere this have secured such legislative enactments respecting the making, selling, and using as a beverage alcoholic liquors, as that at this hour, in the day of time, no

distillery would be left to pollute the air, nor man with a certified "good moral character" (?) be known to ask for license to sell "distilled damnation," nor any drunkard be seen reeling on the verge of hell. Sabbath-breaking would hardly be known among us, and she, whose bed is level with the mouth of perdition, would have been the joyful mother of legitimate children.

3. Bringing men to Christ means vastly more than persuading them to think that sprinkling, pouring, or immersion is the exclusive or only mode of Christian baptism; for many who would argue loud and long for either of these modes, and compass sea and land, and even other Churches, "to make proselytes," are living very much as the world lives, and are even more penurious than are many of those who make no profession. As it is possible for a person to be a Christian without being an Episcopalian, Presbyterian, Baptist, or a Methodist, so it is possible for him to be either of these without having actually come to Jesus; for positively men may only be said to have come to him in a Gospel sense when he is apprehended as the sinner's only hope.

How many are the expedients to which the sinner will resort, how many the objects of trust on which he will depend, before he will so come to Jesus as to be saved by him! Yet returning from his vain and fruitless search, and fixing his eye of faith on Christ,

and apprehending him as his only hope, he is heard to say and sing,

“Other knowledge I disdain ;  
    ‘Tis all but vanity :  
Christ, the Lamb of God, was slain,  
    He tasted death for me.  
Me to save from endless woe  
    The sin-atoning Victim died :  
Only Jesus will I know,  
    And Jesus crucified.”

What an utter repudiation of every other trust and dependence is here expressed ! In all the realms of thought, and from among the endless variety of beings peopling the dominions of an infinitely wise and powerful Creator, he has fixed his thought, his mind, his soul on Christ, and he continues to sing,

“Here will I set up my rest ;  
    My fluctuating heart  
From the heaven of his breast  
    Shall never more depart :  
Whither should a sinner go ?  
    His wounds for me stand open wide ;  
Only Jesus will I know,  
    And Jesus crucified.”

A person has come to Jesus when his word is taken as the rule of his life ; for obedience to the teachings of Christ is the good test of discipleship. “Ye are my friends,” said Jesus, “if ye do whatsoever I command you.” It is not prompt and willing obedience to one direction or command of the Mas-

ter, but to all of them. Some bigots will lay great stress and seek to enforce some duties on the young disciple, to the utter neglect and disregard of others ; but none have ever so learned Jesus. Some make baptism the door into the Church or the house of the Lord ; but he says, "I am the door." It is not through Christ's ordinances, but through himself, that we are to pass from the carnal into the spiritual, and from the earthly into the heavenly. A soul coming to Jesus by taking his word as the rule of his life does not discriminate between duties and obligations, selecting such to discharge as are, in the esteem of men, most respectable, or those which bigots have exalted into hobbies ; for his Master has said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Hence, if he has wronged his neighbor in any wise, he will try to make restitution ; if he has neglected to read God's word, he will read it frequently and with care ; if he has restrained prayer, he will "call on the name of the Lord ;" if he has turned a deaf ear to the pleadings of the poor, he will now help them ; if he has withheld from the claims of the Church, he will now cheerfully, and as God hath prospered him, cast into her treasury ; if he has never commemorated the death of the Son of God by partaking of the Holy Communion, he will do so the first opportunity ; and if he has not, as he should have, been baptized "with

water" "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost," he will be as soon as he intelligently can.

To him who has come to Jesus by taking his word as the rule of his life there are no duties as great or small, for they are all alike great and equally obligatory. Hence he becomes a symmetrical Christian character, rounded and full in all its parts and features, and not as a well-developed man with a broken leg, a paralized arm, a cropped ear, and a plucked-out eye. A "thus saith the Lord" is to him the end of controversy and his law of action. Amid the conflict of creeds, or the dictation of would-be leaders, he turns to the living oracles, and devoutly inquires, "What do they teach?" and hearing, he obeys. Let us now consider the question, "How may men be brought to Jesus?"

The great heart of the Church and of the ministry is agitated, and even aching, with this mighty problem, and yet so true as Jesus used the spittle and the clay to open the eyes of the blind, and the laying-on of the hands of Ananias in restoring sight to the smitten Saul, so true is it that God uses means in bringing men to Jesus. In an important sense God has ordained that men shall be saved by men, and in our text and context, we think, may be found the secret of success in bringing men to Christ. Let us read: "John stood, and two of his disciples; and looking

upon Jesus as he walked, he saith, Behold the Lamb of God! And the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus. Then Jesus turned, and saw them following, and saith unto them, What seek ye?" "One of the two which heard John speak, and followed him, was Andrew, Simon Peter's brother. He [Andrew] first findeth his own brother Simon, and saith unto him, We have found the Messias, which is, being interpreted, the Christ. And he brought him to Jesus." Mark, "Andrew" was one of the two disciples which had heard John say, "Behold the Lamb of God!" He was "one of the two" who on that occasion followed Jesus, and unto whom the Saviour had turned and said, "What seek ye?" And as he, with his brother disciple, answered, "Master, where dwellest thou? he saith unto them, Come and see. They came and saw where he dwelt, and abode with him that day: for it was about the tenth hour." Andrew, therefore, had the great and inestimable privilege of a day with Jesus! and the legitimate influence of this rare and rich association is seen in his first finding "his own brother Simon," and saying "unto him, We have found the Messias," and in bringing him to Jesus. This, then, is the lesson here taught: That acquaintance with Jesus and supreme love for him are essential for all to possess who would bring others to him. The connection between knowing and loving Jesus is most intimate and evident. The obedience

required by the Gospel is founded in sincere and earnest love for Jesus.

“If all the world my Jesus knew,  
Then all the world would love him too,”

is but the response to the declaration, “Which none of the princes of this world knew, for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.” The conclusion which I reach is this, that, as Andrew became acquainted with Jesus, he loved him; and as he knew and loved Jesus, it was very natural for him to first find “his own brother Simon,” and bring him to Jesus, that he, becoming acquainted with him, might love him also. The great question, then, How can men be brought to Jesus? is here answered. It is by their being looked after and sought out by those who do both know and love him. The laity as well as the ministry is supposed to possess these qualifications. Therefore the world is looking to these instrumentalities for religious light and for a moral charm which shall bring it in its multiplying millions to Christ, the Saviour and Lord. Shall it look in vain, or with slight prospects of realizing its expectation? In vain and with little prospects, until a decided majority, instead of a positive minority, as is now the case, shall maintain their Christian integrity, and consecrate themselves to the work of raising up the fallen, and searching out and

bringing the lost ones to the great and loving Jesus. As "no man is good if others are not made better by him," how alarming the evidence that there is hardly more than one in ten of those who make a profession of faith in Christ who "return to give glory to God" by fully consecrating their lives to his service. It is no more true that God has ordained the sun to rule the day, than it is that he intends his people to be "the salt of the earth" and "the light of the world;" and if this be their collective capacity, obligation must be proportionately on each individual. This, let us hope, each member of the Church is beginning to realize to be the truth. God grant that this conviction may become universal! For a number of years past many religious societies have seemed to think that no considerable number of souls could be brought to Jesus without either a "sensational preacher" or the presence and labors of "a praying band," and "according to their" unbelief has it been "unto them." Only when one or both of these have been employed have they had any prosperity, and that which has thus been secured has been the most evanescent. Not that many persons have really been brought to Christ through these peculiar instrumentalities, but that only the few are saved to the future service and honor of the Church because the membership itself did not travail in spirit for their regeneration, and hence there was

not, nor could there be, any real sympathy existing between the old and the newly converted. Behold those men and women of God ! There are from fifteen to twenty of them, and they constitute one tenth of the society or Church to which they belong. They are met in their usual place of prayer. God is with them, and is giving them an intense desire for the salvation of the wicked. Occasionally one yields, and, taking his place with them, they "rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory." He feels at home with them, and they with him. Now suppose a large majority of said society were in the spiritual condition of the few, and that God should proportionately bless their labors and honor their faith, then there would be eight or ten converted where there is but one, and those duplicating themselves in others brought to Christ, how the triumphs of the cross would multiply, and the increasing numbers found and brought to Jesus ! God's name would soon be known, and his praises sung "from the rivers unto the ends of the earth." Then our children's children, to the latest generations, might be hopefully reckoned as constituting "the saved of the Lord" in "the ages to come;" and the rulers and the people of all nations, learning war no more, but dwelling in peace, and hoping for heaven, "filled with love and crowned with glory," the change from earth to heaven would hardly be perceptible.

Enoch's way of going there would become common, while the numbers getting there would be prodigious. Ay, this bringing men "to Jesus" is far-reaching in its consequences, both to the bringers and to those who are brought, and let me assure you there is no one who comes to Jesus but that he would delight to put honor upon by helping him to bring some other lost one to him. O if every believer in Christ would say, with Isaiah, "Here am I; send me," it would not be long before he would have the honor of bringing his "own brother" or dear friend to Christ the Lord. Please, dare to do what "Saul of Tarsus" did even before he found "peace in believing," and sincerely say, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" And as he shall direct, go in his name and find some one "who is waiting in Jesus to live," and bring him with winning voice and yearning heart

"where flows the blood  
That bought your guilty souls for God,"

and stay with him until he finds his pardon and his peace. If you have really "found the Christ," if you have had but "a day with him," you must regard it as the greatest honor and of the highest importance to "sound his glories forth," and to give yourselves to the work of seeking those who know not him, "whom to know aright is life eternal."

## NECESSITY OF REVIVALS.

"O Lord, revive thy work."—HAB. iii, 2.

THE work which the prophet prays may be revived is not man's work, but God's work. And yet he did not mean God's general work, but his work in particular. Not his creative or providential work, but his work of grace and salvation. In this we see,

1. The work of conviction. This includes a knowledge of sin and a painful sense of sin. Many know that they are sinners, but few, comparatively, feel that they are. As the universal testimony of men establishes the fact that fire burns, so the unimpeachable testimony of revelation proves all men to be sinners ; but, as no man knows how it pains to be burned until he has experienced it, so no one knows what it is to be a sinner until he feels it. If a sun-glass is held in a right position the rays of light are brought to a focus, where almost any inflammable substance will be set on fire, but you may hold an equally perfect glass toward the sun, and if you keep moving it, it will never be the means of setting any thing on fire. Now, what the sun-glass is to the production of fire, attention is in effecting a painful sense of sin ; yet, as sun-glasses would con-

tribute nothing toward producing fire in the absence of the sun, so real conviction for sin could never be without the silent but powerful operations of the Holy Spirit. The truth presented to the mind by the word of the Lord must be taken by the Spirit and burned into the conscience. The process is painful, but the result justifies it. A company of men wrecked on a frozen island may be somewhat conscious of their perilous condition immediately, but it is not until the gnawings of hunger, premonitive of starvation, are felt that they can fully appreciate an ample supply of food, or, becoming stupefied by the cold, even to insensibility, they are brought back to consciousness by the Lord's sending the lightning, and thus setting on fire the wreck of the ship and affording them temporal salvation. Now, we are all wrecked on the continent of sin. More than eighteen hundred years ago Jesus, the "Sun of Righteousness," lighted a fire in the East, whose light has radiated westward, revealing "the habitations of cruelty," and warming into moral sensibility millions ready to perish. Brethren, this light has reached us. Its beams have melted our hearts, and hence we say, Pour forth thy piercing rays, thou glorious light, and let them penetrate sinners here, that the work of conviction may be thorough and complete.

2. The work of conversion is the work of the Lord. We use the word in its highest, broadest

sense. We use it as embracing all the doings of grace in and for the soul of man. Is the soul penitent and believing? Is it justified and sanctified? Has it power over sin? Does it hate and loathe it? Is it joyful in hope? Is it patient in tribulation? Does it return good for evil, and blessing for cursing? Has it ardent longings for the salvation of others? Does it sigh for the holiness of heaven? Is its conversation there? In a word, is God's will its law and its delight? If so, it is born of God. God has been and is now at work in it, and these results we call conversion. Contemplate its subject just for a moment. There he is with mind renewed, and an immortal nature transformed in all its powers. His thoughts and affections are turned from the earthly unto the heavenly. See, he is bathing himself in "life's healing fountain," that, with rejuvenated powers, he may labor for the salvation of those who are in peril. Listen to his prayers, indited by the Spirit. How he pleads for the release of the captive! What words of encouragement and hope he pours into the ears of the desponding! How he weeps with those who weep, how he rejoices with those who rejoice! All this is the legitimate fruit of conversion, and is used by the Spirit in carrying on that glorious work in this world of sin and death, for God evidently intended the experiences of men to be a Gospel to others.

Let us now consider some facts why a revival of God's work is greatly to be desired. And,

1. As conversion follows conviction, in some sense, as effect does the cause, it is evident there must be convictions before there will be conversions. A revival of the work of conviction is necessary to a revival of the work of conversion ; at least, so necessary that if it could be made to appear that there would be no more convictions, it would not be difficult to prove that there would be no more conversions, for no man ever fled "for refuge to lay hold on the hope set before him" until he saw and felt himself exposed to impending ruin.

No more conversions ! How do such words fall on a Christian's ear ? How they affect his heart ! How the clouds gather and lower over his most cherished anticipations, his fondest hopes ! He beholds the Church depopulating, as one after another of her members, in quick succession, is swept off by "the dark wing of death's angel," until the work is finished, until all are gone. Then what a scene floats into his vision ! It is a moral desolation over which an angel might weep. No Sabbath, no sanctuary, no worshiping assembly, no family altar, no secret prayer, no devout meditation, no study of the Bible, no Sabbath-school, no song of praise, and not one yearning, loving, sympathizing heart, in the whole family of man ; but, instead of these, congregated

enemies striving for the mastery ; national collisions, neighborhood quarrels and family uproars, horrid oaths, fearful imprecations, no truth, but universal falsehood ; and hell, heart-deep, spread over the world ! But alas ! alas ! the attempt is vain. Imagination never conceived images of the ruinous and of the terrible sufficient to any more than feebly indicate the condition of the world without the Church of the living God in it. For, with all her "spots and wrinkles," with all her tardy movements toward the fulfillment of her mission, with all her backslidings, imperfections, and sins, she is still "the salt of the earth, and the light of the world." Feeble as is her strength, she is yet going forth "from conquering unto conquest." Cold as is her heart, it still sends the vital currents forth, by which more than a hundred thousand souls are annually warmed into the life of Jesus. Half-closed as are her eyes, she already beholds "the mountain of the Lord's house . established in the top of the mountains, . and all nations" flowing "unto it;" and weak as is her faith, it enfolds this vast and glorious consummation. By the continuance of the revival spirit individuals, communities, and nations shall be brought into the kingdom of Christ, and the desolate places shall be made glad for them. Thus it is seen why a revival of the work of God is greatly to be desired. It is the order ordained of God to perpetuate his Church

on earth, and to diffuse the saving element of the Gospel among the nations.

Let us now give some thought to the means by which a revival may be promoted. And,

1. From the text we infer that prayer is one means, and the experience of Christians proves the inference legitimate. In the winter of 1853 and 1854 Deacon Edsall, James Rosell, and J. B. Dewitt entered into a covenant to pray for a revival of God's work in their community. Satan in that locality seemed to have things just to his liking. The wickedness of the wicked had become great, the love of many had waxed cold, but these men of prayer met and prayed once a week for six weeks in succession. At their seventh meeting another man of prayer joined them. God poured out his Spirit upon them; and in a short time it was evident that a general awakening was spreading through the community, and fully seventy souls were believed to be converted to God. In the fall of 1851 I was appointed to the Frenchtown Charge, (now Liberty Corners and Asylum,) then just formed out of parts of Towanda Charge and Cherry mission. Revs. T. M'Elheney and R. D. Brooks, of precious memory, had labored there the previous year, and wonderful displays of saving power had been witnessed. I began my labors then with the feeling that my chief work must be to try and feed the

lambs of the flock, and that little could be expected in the way of bringing those to Christ who had withstood the gracious and powerful influences of the preceding year. Yet so it was, that as these converts were fed and strengthened, they would unite their prayers in behalf of some hardened sinner, nor cease until he yielded to be saved by grace. Then they would fix their faith and prayer and “labor of love” on some other soul, and in this way, chiefly, about fifty were brought into the light of salvation that year. Not only in the long winter-night prayer-meetings, but in those of the short summer evenings, even in haying and harvesting, souls were prayed into conviction and into a new life also. I have noted that souls converted under such influences are very likely to continue faithful. Brethren, were we all united to Christ by faith, just as we should be, what wonders would be wrought! O for a baptism into one spirit! Infinite Father, send it upon us! But,

2. Witnessing for Jesus is another means promotive of a revival. A degree of importance attaches to this which, I fear, is overlooked by many. Just think. The last words of Christ to the apostles relate to this very important duty. Read and ponder them: “And ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth.” In Acts xxvi, 16, we learn that St. Paul was called to be “a witness” as

well as a minister. Unto this work every believer in Jesus is called, and the Spirit impresses the message he is to bear to others on his renewed heart. Would that all were faithful in delivering it! To speak well of a friend who has helped us in the time of need is not only a duty, but a pleasure also. Think of the help Jesus has rendered us—such help as no other being could or would render, and shall we not confess it? Will we not take pleasure in proclaiming it to the world? How shall this be done most effectually? Let me tell you how. Enforce the testimony of your lips with a Christ-like spirit exhibited in your lives. Were you very ill, and had you found a spring of water possessing marked medicinal properties, you would not only tell of it, but use it also. If you have found Christ very precious, you cannot fully do your duty by simply saying this; you must keep going to him, that others, seeing you go, may be induced to go likewise. And remember, the greater spiritual health you manifest the mightier will be the motive you give them to do so without delay. What we would specifically teach at this point is this: That professors of religion should witness for Christ in their lives as well as in word, by being controlled in buying and selling, and in all their intercourse with the world, by the principle of love to God and love to man. Should this practice generally obtain, how effectually would the tide of

infidelity be stayed and “the hearts of the disobedient be turned to the wisdom of the just,” and convictions and conversions be multiplied !

Many large cities are furnished with water from great reservoirs, constructed at vast expense, and at considerable distances from these cities. By means of larger and lesser pipes this element is borne to the numerous residences and places of business. Now, if these pipes corrode so that they leak, or if obstructions get into them so that the flow is turned in another direction, the supply is cut off, and the inhabitants are left in destitution. The Revelator tells us of a pure river of the water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and the Lamb ; and we sing,

“Its streams the whole creation reach ;”

but the question arises, How are those streams reaching the whole creation ? How, but through the Church of God ! Hence every member should consider himself a section of the great spiritual medium through which God designs the great life-element to flow. Has it stopped with you, brother ? or has your life and example so obstructed it that no one is blessed through you or by you ? If this be so, for Christ’s sake, for your own sake, and for the sake of others, let this stream run through your heart and out into your life, gladdening them, and making others

glad. A profession of but ordinary attainments in the religion of Jesus, if fully corroborated by the daily life, is far better in its influence upon others than the highest profession lacking the edge and the power which a blameless life would give it.

3. The faithful preaching of the Gospel is promotive of a revival of the work of God. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." There are few men who can long withstand the burning eloquence of an earnest, soul-loving and sin-hating ministry. Hence, comparatively very few unconverted men are in the habit of regularly attending such a ministry. The class of truths they utter are too searching, scathing, and disturbing for either their comfort or convenience, and, unless they at once yield, it is but seldom that the spiritual archer finds them within reach of his arrows. In nothing else do wicked men exhibit such great cowardice as they do on the subject of personal religion.

Wicked men, and even women, dare drink "the dark beverage of hell," and sell "distilled damnation" to young men and boys, and mingle with gamblers, whose dreams are of beggared families and ruined victims of their midnight deeds, and yet they are too cowardly to daily read God's holy word, or to faithfully attend and prayerfully listen, every Sabbath, to the fearless preaching of the Gospel; for, just

about as soon as the truth begins to hurt, they either stay away or go, resolved that they will give no attention. To such the minister is only interesting as he deals in "glittering generalities," and manages to make this type of hearer feel that he has no special message for him. Of course such preaching never contributes to a revival of the work of the Lord. On the contrary, it is earnest, truthful preaching, close and heart-searching, what may be called chain-lightning preaching, which scathes and burns its utterances into the souls of men—preaching that holds the law to the sinner and the sinner to the law until he can appreciate an invitation to come to Christ sent to his heart all the way from Calvary. It is preaching which is "in demonstration of the Spirit and of power," that begets solicitude that stirs the Church and moves men to mightily cry for mercy. It is such preaching that helps inaugurate a revival. Under such preaching we have some hundreds and thousands brought to Christ and started in the way to heaven. And thus shall it be in every place where God has a people, where they shall be baptized into one spirit, and go out after sinners—"A flame of love, a flood of tears." Hence, finally, the agency of the Holy Spirit is essential in the revival of God's work. Strictly speaking, there is no praying, witnessing, or preaching without it. It is the Spirit which starts and keeps this religious enginery

in motion. It holds the relation to a revival that the rain does to the germination and maturing of vegetable productions. Allow an illustration. The farmer goes into his field of young corn. It is vigorous and wears the hues of health. He is elated with the promise of an abundant yield. Time passes on, the sun pours its vertical rays upon it; but as the rain is denied, it begins to wither. Again the farmer goes forth to view it. He feels sad and disheartened, and says, "I shall have no corn." But, lo, a cloud appears in a favorable locality, and the voice of the thunder proclaims an approaching shower. The cloud thickens, the rain descends, his corn is revived, and with it his hopes for an abundant crop. Ay, it is the rain of grace, the effusion of the Holy Spirit, which must germinate the seeds of truth that have been sown by faithful preaching in the hearts of the people, or attention will never ripen into conviction, conviction into conversion, and conversion into a perfect Christian life, rendering its subject "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light."

Brethren, do you go to the sanctuary every Sabbath praying for the Holy Ghost? Do your prayers while there constantly ascend for his descent upon the impenitent? It should be so. It must be, or their blood will yet be found on your skirts. In the name of God "take hold on strength." Sinners should be converted by hundreds in the sanctuaries

of God every Sabbath, and would be if all who go to them as professors of religion were believing, as they might, for such results. “If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children ; how much more will your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him ?”

When the atmosphere of our Churches becomes charged with the Holy Spirit, given in answer to united believing prayer, revivals shall be the rule and not the exception, and all the gates of Zion shall become praise. Every company of believers steadily worshiping together may help decide the question, When shall this thing be ?

“O Spirit of the living God,  
In all thy plenitude of grace,  
Where'er the foot of man hath trod,  
Descend on our apostate race.

Give tongues of fire, and hearts of love  
To preach the reconciling word ;  
Give power and unction from above,  
Where'er the joyful sound is heard.”

## RESURRECTION OF DORCAS.

"And it was known throughout all Joppa; and many believed in the Lord."—ACTS ix, 42.

THUS concludes an account of the death and the resurrection of a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ, "named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas." We think it to be illustrative of the sinner, and of the influence his spiritual resurrection should have on others. It is said, (verse 37,) "that she was sick, and died." She was therefore dead, and if dead, she was unconscious of the various objects of interest surrounding her. A husband's wailing grief, fond children's ringing laugh and innocent prattle wake not her soul to sorrow or to joy. The trembling, bended forms of father and mother, whose approach she used to greet with veneration and love, now come near and pass away without a look of recognition. The glorious sun, in whose light she once rejoiced, now falls on her as on the senseless marble. The melody of song which once repeated itself on the chords of her heart, pass over unheeded and unheard. She wakes not to any sentient delight, she moves not at the approach of any catastrophe. She is listless, still, and dead. Thus is it with men

“dead in trespasses and sins.” Beautiful scenery made by the hand divine, clouds of golden drapery, skies of eternal blue lit up with stars and traversed by the moon, waters and lands, streams and seas and vales and mountains, all bearing the impress of wisdom and of power, are disregarded by the impenitent, and he is, seemingly, as unhappy as he could have been had God made the earth with but one mountain, one river, one tree, one flower, and one star to shine on them from the heavens.

The scenes of the garden and of the cross, in which the God-man is the hero, and the redemption of the world is the object, do not move him, and utterly fail to win his love. Even the flight of time, with its precious freight of golden opportunity ; the end of probation, with its stamp of doom ; the decisions of the final judgment, and the terrible retributions that lie beyond it, involving banishment from God, from hope and heaven, the gnawings of an undying worm, and the beatings of an endless storm, fail to excite his fears, or to prompt him to pray. O he is dead, and his insensibility proclaims it. What shall be done to bring him to life ? The good must help him, for God has ordained that men should be saved by men.

Even in the resurrection of Dorcas, Peter acted an important part. Two men were sent for Peter, “desiring him that he would not delay to come,” who,

when he had arrived, “kneeled down, and prayed ; and turning him to the body, said, Tabitha, arise. And she opened her eyes : and when she saw Peter, she sat up... And when he had called the saints and widows, he presented her alive.” The conversion of “Saul of Tarsus” is also an example in point. His falling exercise was not his conversion, for after that “the Lord said unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do :” when the Lord commissioned a certain disciple, named Ananias, to perform this work, who, “putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord (even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest) hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales : and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.” Thus is it in the conversion of sinners in this day. Awakened they may be, and frequently are, by the direct operations of the Holy Spirit, without human instrumentality; but they are always brought into the light of salvation in answer to the prayers of the pious, or by their Christian instruction and counsel.

God could have raised Dorcas as easily without Peter’s presence or prayers as with, but he did not elect to do so ; or, without the laying on of the hands of Ananias on the head of Saul, he could have

removed the scales from his eyes, and filled him with the Holy Ghost. So, in the conversion of sinners; but, delighting to put honor on his people, he employs them in the work of faith, in the labor of love, constraining them to say, "We then, as workers together with him, beseech you also that ye receive not the grace of God in vain."

Christian! God has been, and is still, convincing men of sin; but where is your faith, and where your willingness to go at the bidding of the Master, and tell them that he waits to be gracious? You know that they are spiritually dead, and that God has called upon you to the work of bearing to them the message of life, and that in doing so he places great honor on you; but you suffer a false and destructive modesty to hold you back, to close your lips, and to keep you dumb amid the ravages and the multiplying victims of moral death.

It is not enough that you do no harm, for you profess to be followers, imitators of Him who went about doing good. Peter was sent for when Dorcas had died, and he came and prayed. You have been sent for, or called to work in God's vineyard, and God, by the death of every unsaved sinner, is saying to you, "Go, and before the living die, as others have, tell them of the love of Jesus, tell them of hope and of heaven." Go and do this in God's name, and he will see that they hear you; or, if they will not, that

the guilt will be on their own souls, and that you do not lose your reward.

But the results of this case of resurrection and those flowing from the spiritual resurrection of sinners claims our attention. It is said of Dorcas that "she opened her eyes; and when she saw Peter, she sat up." The heart throbs, the pulse beats, the eyes flash with intelligence, the ear listens, the muscles and nerves move, and she is again a creature of life, a being of beauty, and of loveliness. Sweet voices fall upon her ears, the forms and features of friends meet her gaze, and this woman, who "was full of good works," goes forth rejoicing in a new life, it may be now the more sweet because of the temporary deprivation. Blessed result! So is it with the sinner, when his night of moral death has passed. His heart leaps for joy; his moral sensibilities are all alive; his eyes and ears, now opened,

"Sees God in the clouds,  
Or hears him in the wind."

Nay, more, he fixes his delightful gaze on Calvary, and listens enraptured to the sweet strains of mercy coming all the way to his heart from the "excellent glory." He arises into a new life, and goes forth to act for God and humanity. As in the case of the resurrection of Dorcas, "many believed in the Lord," so the conversion of a sinner results not only

in making him happy, but has a direct tendency to bring others into the life of Christ.

The resurrection of Dorcas was a verity. She was really dead, and was absolutely brought back to life; and so evident was this to those acquainted with her, that "many believed in the Lord." The actual conversion, or spiritual resurrection, of a sinner is so evidently the work of God, and the change is so great and radical, that others are not only led to say, "This is the Lord's doing," but they are led to seek this power on their own hearts. The legitimate inference is this: "If God is good enough to save my friend, who was a sinner, surely there is ground to hope that he will save me if I, like him, but seek his saving power."

This element of influence is found in almost all departments of human society. Men are controlled in their opinions, their habits, and their religion by the views, conduct, and religion of others. This principle obtains also among men in regard to the various vices and sins that degrade mankind and prepare them for the detestable society of the obscene, the licentious, the profane, the drunken, and of devils forever. Some will seek to justify themselves for doing any thing that is low and mean and hellish with the plea, "It is the custom of society." Now, this element in society, thank God! may be used for noble and holy purposes. He has evidently designed

that it should be, for he says, “Let your light so shine before men, that” others, seeing “your good works,” may be led to “glorify your Father which is in heaven.” I have heard lumbermen tell of trailing logs down the difficult mountain slope. Sometimes a single team moves forty, and even fifty, in the narrow, crooked path which has been made for them to travel in. The logs are connected by short chains and hooks or dogs. The team is hitched to the foremost, and as that moves, the next starts, and that starts a third, and thus a whole trail is moved to its destination on the bank of the stream. Thus I have seen it in some communities. A large number of persons, connected by invisible chains of influence, have been drawn to the waters of salvation, and have been made partakers of the divine nature ; and thus will it become to be in all places, when the influences which have sundered these delicate connections shall be disregarded, and the broken links shall be re-welded by a divinely germinating power.

Dorcas had evidently gathered about her many friends, for it is not only said that she “was full of good works and alms-deeds which she did,” but that “all the widows stood by him [Peter] weeping, and showing the coats and garments which Dorcas made, while she was with them.” Now, each of these may have been representatives of a different class, and thus the blessed news of her resurrection was com-

municated ; and we may reasonably suppose one and another and another saying to their friends, “ A friend of mine, by the name of Dorcas, was sick the other day and died, and the Lord, by his servant Peter, restored her to life—absolutely resurrected her. Is he not a good Lord ? A mighty Jesus ? Let us believe in him.” And thus “ it was known throughout all Joppa ; and many believed in the Lord.”

Believers in Jesus ! you have been raised by the power of God from a death of sin ; you have rejoiced in a new life. God intends that you should be instruments of life to others. Has the connection between you and the Fountain of Life been broken off ? If so, no wonder that your unconverted children and neighbors do not come to Christ and be saved. God help you to prayerfully examine this point, and to see that you have constantly a hold on Christ ! This secured, he will be drawing you nearer and still nearer to himself, and as you move toward him, you shall see others coming with you, and many shall believe in the Lord.

Then, from the head of the throng, you shall be heard to shout, “ They come ! Bless God, they come ! ” And from the rear the joyful response shall roll, “ We come ! O God, we come ! ” In conclusion, allow me to remind you that it was the faith of Peter, connecting him with the source of

life, which brought the resurrection power to Dorcas' dead body, and that it is your faith in Christ which must so connect you with him, as to make you mediums of spiritual life to others.

"I ask them whence their victory came:  
They, with united breath,  
Ascribe their conquest to the Lamb,  
Their triumph to his death.

They marked the footsteps that he trod;  
His zeal inspired their breast ;  
And, following their incarnate God,  
Possess the promised rest.

Our glorious Leader claims our praise  
For his own pattern given ;  
While the long cloud of witnesses  
Show the same path to heaven."

### BRETHREN COMMENDED TO GOD.

"And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified."—ACTS xx, 32.

CHRISTIANS are brethren. They are born of the same Spirit, supported by the same might, contending against the same enemies, gaining the same victories, encouraged by the same hope, trusting in the "one Saviour," and bound for the same glorious and eternal heaven. Such are the subjects of the apostle's commendation, "Brethren, I commend you to God." It is as if he had said or thought, "You are weak, but he is almighty; you are ignorant, but he fully knows; you have formidable foes, but he will help you to conquer and subdue them." "I commend you to God," not to the Virgin Mary, nor even to the angels, though "excelling in strength." You will need help superior to any that saint or angel can afford—the help of the mighty One, and who is ever present in time of need. "To God," therefore, omnipotent and omnipresent, whose goodness is equal to his power, "I commend you."

You see he greatly desired his brethren to be

well cared for and fully furnished against every assault and every emergency, and his comprehensive Christian mind, his large experience, and his yearning heart of love would not allow him to stop short of God. It is pleasant, and often profitable, to have tried and true friends to accompany us as we are making life's journey; but at its close, when help is needed most, they always utterly fail us. Not, it may be, for want of willingness on their part to go any farther, but from a consciousness of inability to befriend us should they go. How painfully keen is the conviction that there is a point beyond which our friends cannot go with us—a point at which they must stop, while we pass on. Now St. Paul would have believers still attended at that point, and therefore "commends them to God." He also commends them "to the word of his grace." How expressive! how appropriate! "The word of his grace." Surely it is a gracious word. It brings to men the thoughts of a God of grace, and makes them familiar with these thoughts, so that amid life's vicissitudes they are instructed and comforted and wonderfully sustained while laboring to work out the problem of their destiny. What a marvelous book is the word of God's grace! It is at once both the oldest and newest book in the world. It is the only authentic history of the race to which it has been given. From it we learn more perfectly what men

have been, what they now are, and what they will be, than from all other sources of information put together.

The efforts of grace to save men are nowhere else so faithfully and fully recorded as in the word of God, while the achievements of grace, as chronicled there, constitutes a powerful incentive to men of all ages and nations to yield themselves subjects to its bloodless victories. One of the inspired writers begins as if he were about to give us, in round numbers, the grand aggregate of those redeemed and saved by grace, but closes with the significant declaration, “After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands ; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.” Now, grace saved every one in that innumerable multitude—saved them from sin, saved them unto holiness, saved them here, and saved them into heaven. O grace, thou art wonderful ! O grace, thou art mighty ! And may all who are commended to thee yield themselves to thy peaceful reign, thy saving might !

Please, now, listen to the apostle’s reasons for commanding his brethren “to God, and to the word of

his grace.” The first reason is implied in the declaration, “which is able to build you up.” As if he had said, Brethren, you are all, by sin, in a ruined state, but the word of the Lord or doctrine of grace is able to repair the ruins, to reconstruct and renew the disorganized faculties of your souls, and to make of them a temple sacred to God alone. “Able to build you up.” He speaks of the Church collectively, the same which is styled by the Saviour “little flock,” of little or imperfect love, of little or imperfect strength, and all this because of their little or imperfect faith ; or, few in number, and these not men of great worldly distinction. But “the word,” or doctrine “of grace,” is able to make you large in faith, large in love, and of great strength in the accomplishment of good. It is able to add to and greatly increase your numbers, and to bring to your fellowship and communion men of good intellects, and of great learning, and of commanding power and influence for good; and, brethren, I rejoice that we live in the day when this declaration of the apostle is having a visible fulfillment. Christian ideas are now respected by all nations, because they have proven themselves to be the most powerful and beneficent to hold and control the minds of earth’s teeming millions. The material as well as the mental and moral wealth of the world is made to contribute toward the building up of the mountain of the Lord’s house,

and to the beautifying of it in all lands. “The mustard-seed” Church, or kingdom, has broken the surface, rich dews from heaven have watered it, the blood of martyrs have nourished it, and already do its branches offer a place of shelter and of rest to the weary of every clime. Great Builder of the Church, save us as thy people from bounding our views by our senses! How prone we are to do so. As in our great national conflict, when the Union forces were at the very throat of the rebellion, and when no truly loyal man would have been surprised to have heard that its heart had been pierced, there were those in almost every community who would keep saying, “We are farther from the end now than at the beginning of the struggle; we had better sue for peace, for we can never conquer.” So is it with a few members of the Church in almost all localities. And all this because they have gotten into the habit of thinking that nothing can be done unless it is done in a hurry, thus denying to the God of grace what they are compelled to accord to the God of nature. Noah was a great man, and built a great ark, but he was one hundred and twenty years in doing it. Solomon, too, was a great man—great in wisdom and in wealth, and he builded a great temple, but he was a long time in completing it; so God is a very long time in making a full-grown oak, or pine, or cedar.

Our Lord Jesus Christ came into this world in the form of an infant, and though, at the age of twelve years, he declared that he must be about his Father's business, yet it was not until twenty-one years after that he so saw "of the travail of his soul" as to let fall on the ears of a perishing world the wonderful and glorious truth, "It is finished," and that other grandly significant one, "I am the resurrection and the life." Hence the true motto for the Christian is, "labor and wait." It is not from the size of the rain-drops, but from their number that we have the most to hope. So with the efforts of ministers and members of the Church of God. They are to be continued and repeated until the blessed result is accomplished. None of us yielded to the first entreaty nor accepted the first invitation. We all had heard many sermons, and our hearts had often been visited by the blessed Spirit, before we consented to occupy a place in God's spiritual temple, and yet we need much building up to be of very essential service there. But "the word of his grace is able to build you up." It is full of nourishment for our minds and hearts—full of promise—full of blessing. O, brethren, is it not true that we have too little to do with the Bible? We do not search it as we should, and do not feed upon it as we might and ought. We need baptizing with its Spirit, our minds should be filled with its light, and our souls

fortified with its truths. Thus furnished, God could use us to great and good advantage, and men would bless us in his name.

Brethren making up the Sheldrake Society, will you consent to be thus “built up?” This, far more than where and what shall be my next field of labor, has had my care and solicitude, while I have been among you. This, far more than who shall be your next minister, should now have, and continue to have, a large place in your thoughts and prayers. Sometimes in building, bad or unsuitable timber is used, and in process of time the structure is disfigured or endangered by its presence in the building. When this is really known, wisdom dictates its removal, that its place may be filled with sound material.

I believe the custom to be quite common among the prudent to examine their building occasionally, and when a decayed and worthless sill or post is found, to have it taken out at once. Trusting that you will allow these illustrations to have their influence on your future conduct as a Church, I can and do prayerfully “commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able,” not only “to build you up” attractively, but substantially and permanently. Then your existence here as a religious body shall be a blessing to this community, and your example attract and draw the on-coming generations

to Christ and goodness, to hope and to heaven. Come, then, brethren, "to God and to the word of his grace." Come to them reverently, and come to them daily; come to them "for correction and instruction in righteousness;" come to them in all your afflictions and in all your temptations; and in all your sadness and sorrows, come. When the world censures and when it approves, when it curses and when it blesses, you will have need to come. Remember that in all the worlds which God has made and peopled, there is only One who fully knows and sympathizes with you, and that you are at liberty to cast "all your cares upon him, for he careth for you," and is willing to listen to your faintest whispered prayer. The Bible, which is "the word of his grace," is not only able to "build you up," to strengthen and beautify you as Christians, but "to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified;" for, brethren, that is the end, the grand object had in view, in building you up "among all them which are sanctified." What a desirable place for an inheritance!

Were we permitted to select the place in which to possess an inheritance in this world, if we acted wisely, it would be in the midst of the purest society, where our children should see the least of sin and hear the least of wrong; where the greatest numbers were educated and intelligent, and the fewest were

ignorant and dull; where virtue was most common, and its absence constituted the exception; where there was always the greatest abundance, and the very least of pinching poverty; where health was general, and sickness seldom known; where the people lived the longest, happiest, lives, and where children rarely die. Ay, could such a place be found on the broad, green earth, we could there fix our inheritance, and there build and adorn our abodes. Such a choice, however, is not ours; yet a better one is. It is in a region of cloudless skies, where no thunder-bolts are hurled and no lurid lightnings glare; where no tempest's tread chills the heart with fear, and the red plowshare of war is never driven. It is in the land whose "inhabitants never say, I am sick." It is "among all them which are sanctified." In this inheritance are palms of victory and crowns of glory, immortal youth, and the fadeless and endless society of those who have been modeled after the fashion of Him "who is altogether lovely and the chiefest among ten thousand." It comprises the possession of all things which the soul can explore and enjoy for ever and ever. There, there are the fields of light and the mansions of rest. There, there the river of life and bliss eternal. We meet and part here, but if "built up," as God and the word of his grace is able to build us up, we shall meet again, where the joy of

meeting will not be abated by thought of parting.  
For

“There is a land mine eye hath seen  
In visions of enraptured thought,  
So bright, that all which spreads between  
Is with its radiant glories fraught.

“A land upon whose blissful shore  
There rests no shadow, falls no stain ;  
There those who meet shall part no more,  
And those long parted meet again.”

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“Come to the land of peace ;  
From shadows come away ;  
Where all the sounds of weeping cease,  
And storms no more have sway.

“Come to the bright and blest,  
Gathered from every land ;  
For here thy soul shall find its rest  
Amid the shining band.

“Come to our peaceful home,’  
The saints and angels say,  
‘Forsake the world, no longer roam ;  
O wanderer, come away.’”

## WHO HAVE GREAT PEACE.

"Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them."—PSALM cxix, 165.

THE loves and hates of man have the power to demonstrate their character. An order-loving and law-abiding citizen never complains of legal penalties. The truly pious find no fault with the authority which enjoins Christian duties, and holds them accountable for their faithful performance. Men who are seeking to obey God in all things do not try to prove there is no devil, no future general judgment, nor interminable hell for the finally impenitent and unbelieving. If a man hates holiness, it is the most natural of all things for him to dislike what holiness does, and what holiness requires. If he loves purity, there is nothing which purity demands that does not at once have the sanction of his judgment, the consent of his will, and the sincere affections of his heart. He who loves his neighbor as he does himself, does not improve his necessities by lending him money at a ruinous rate of interest, nor by selling him liquors as a beverage which he knows have in them the elements of disease and death. We act toward the objects of our love as if

we loved them, and toward the objects of our hate as if we hated them, unless we add to our other sins the sin of hypocrisy.

1. To love or hate any thing, or being, implies the possession of some knowledge of it. Therefore those who love God's law must somewhat know his law; but this fact is not all that is implied. A large majority of men in all Christian lands know his law; they have read it, and have frequently heard it expounded, yet most of them violate it, disregard it, or treat it with malignant scorn. Its presence in their minds tortures them, and every other subject of thought is preferred to it. Yet this law was made for mind. Why, then, this disrelish for it? Was it not designed as the guide to mind?—its regulating and controlling force? It surely was. Why, then, is the mind so impatient of its directions and control? Is it because the law is wrong and the mind is right? This cannot be; but the reverse is true. The mind is wrong, the law is right; how shall they be made to harmonize? Shall the law be changed to effect this? It knows no change, it is immutable. Hence, if they ever agree, it must be by a change in mind, known among us as a change of heart. Therefore, in loving God's law, is implied "the renewing of the mind," or "being created anew in Christ Jesus." Without this none of the subjects of sin ever did or ever could love such a law. It is

simply a moral impossibility, demonstrated by the choice of men in their associations, subjects of thought, objects of affection, the books which they read, and their themes of conversation, and confirmed by the decision of him who says, "Ye must be born again." God's law is "holy, just, and good;" and until sin is dethroned, there is nothing in man that can possibly take pleasure in these perfections of the Godhead. He, therefore, who labors to convince himself or others that men cannot become good, is virtually trying to convince himself and others that they cannot be happy, inasmuch as goodness and happiness, or loving God's law and the possession of great peace, are inseparable. The great error of mankind is found in the fact that they look for the end while they use not the means. They wish to be happy, but expect, nay, hope, to become so without being good. They find fault with others and with God because they are not happy, and yet the blame is only with themselves; and justice to themselves, to others, and to God, requires that they stop with self, leaving others and God without any censure.

"If solid happiness we prize,  
Within ourselves this jewel lies;  
And they are fools who roam."

The heart in agreement with God is the great condition of happiness, and this agreement is certain and absolute if the heart be yielded to the influence of

grace. This is the way to both know and love God's law. A soul thus yielding and renewed would no sooner have "one jot or tittle" of the law abrogated than it would assume the right to seize the reins of universal government. It has come to know that the "law prohibits nothing but what would do it harm, and that it requires nothing but what would do it good; and its joyful testimony is, "O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day." Our text further suggests,

2. The happiness and stability of those "which love" God's law. Their happiness is indicated by the term, "Great peace." I know that it is with difficulty that we arrive at a clear and full apprehension of such a degree of happiness as being attainable in this world, but I also know that such difficulty has been overcome, and that souls, long sin-tossed and troubled, have found this peace for which they sighed. I know that the spirit of the world is wicked and vile; that the purest motives and the loftiest aims are met with censures, and treated with contempt and scorn; that designing men would betray virtue and lure the innocent to ruin, and through pretended friendship, stab "the palpitating heart of Christ" in the persons of his children; but I also know that God lives, and that Jesus reigns; that the door of mercy is wide open; that faith in Christ still draws a saving power from him; and that the soul of

man, in agreement with God, has “great peace,” in spite of wicked men and devils. If the declaration made in the text refers to the experience of those who lived contemporaneously with the psalmist, those who are living in these days of increasing light and of multiplying privilege should be ashamed of the faith that does not, will not, grasp it ; but, if spoken prophetically, then it refers to those who love God’s law under the Gospel dispensation, and all such are called upon to exhibit in their lives and actions this “great peace,” or a satisfying happiness. Again, the cause producing this “peace” is sufficient to render it “great.” It is, as we have seen, love of God’s law. That is, of that law which is but a transcript of the divine mind and will, being in reality the embodiment of God’s thoughts, feelings, purposes, and gracious acts on our behalf. Certainly, with a knowledge and love of these infix'd in the soul, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, its happiness must be great. The fountain of its joys must be as deep and exhaustless as the nature of God, for it is in the character or nature of the object that we love that has so very much to do with our happiness. Millions have loved other things instead of loving God’s law, loved them intensely and loved them long, yet have all the while been miserable ; and other millions, fully advised of that fact, are doing the same, and those, too, are

miserable. Our love, like our faith, must rest on a proper object, or we are left in utter poverty of soul enjoyment. No man can love a devil enough to make him happy, for the more he loves him the less real happiness he will have; but not thus is it in loving holiness, justice, and goodness, essential elements of God's law. He cannot send out his love to these without a rich return.

As the color of animals is changed by being confined in darkness, and the color of fabrics by putting them into dyes, so the souls of men, in communion with "holiness, justice, and goodness," take upon them the "hues of heaven" or the element of such "great peace" as is "past understanding." And as a "man is known by the company that he keeps," so the character and degree of our happiness is determined by the nature of what we love, and the intelligent strength and constancy of that love. If we love God's law, our happiness will be becoming us. If we love it much and love it long, then we shall have "great peace," both as to degree and duration; for be it remembered, that it is "they which love" his law who have "great peace," and not they who have loved it. It is in the present tense or time. It is while we love. This and this only is the duration of our peace. The stability of such as love God's law is indicated by the phrase, "Nothing shall offend them." Now, if you will

refer to your dictionary, you will see that one meaning of the word "offend" is "to cause to fall or stumble." I think it is in this sense the Saviour used the word when he said, "It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones." Our text teaches us that "nothing shall offend them," that is, cause them "to fall or stumble," "which love" God's law.

Right here a sad conviction forces itself on my mind. It is this: The spiritual state of those (and "their name is legion") who, though they still profess the religion of Christ, are ever and anon offended, stumbled, and turned aside by the conduct of others. I ask my Bible and my God, Can it be possible that these love his law? Or is it true that they have ceased to love it? I know that it is according to sin for me to do wrong because others do it; but I also know it is contrary to grace, and in violation of the law of love. I therefore know, if I stumble or fall for such a reason, that I do not love God's law. While I love that, let others do to me as they will, I shall not be offended. The Saviour has said, "Offenses must needs come," (not that there is a decreed necessity that they shall come, but the condition of the world is such that it is certain they will,) "but woe unto that man by whom the offense cometh." As the Lord Jesus will attend to those

who offend, it is much more becoming us to pity and pray for them than to be turned aside by their conduct. The matter of greatest moment to us is, under every provocation, to see that every thing is right between God and ourselves, and to labor to keep it so. This done, God will take care of those who offer offense ; and it may be he will make us the honored and happy instruments in bringing them to “the excellent knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord.” In conclusion, I would say that in this subject, so briefly and imperfectly discussed, we have two important tests of Christian character — “great peace” and “great stability,” but both depending on, and only continuing, while we love God’s law. Please, Father, help us to exhibit these in our lives, and bring us at the end of life here unto eternal life in heaven, where offenses do not come, and we will praise thee in Jesus, forever ! Amen.

“Thy word is power and life;  
It bids confusion cease,  
And changes envy, hatred, strife,  
To love, and joy, and peace.” ,

## WHAT IS HIS WILL?

"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"—Acts ix, 6.

M R. LOCKE justly remarks, "The first inquiry of a rational being should be, Who made me? The second, Why was I made? Who is my Creator, and what is his will? Saul of Tarsus substantially made that inquiry, and, though very few unconverted men in our day make it, yet it is as important for them to know what is the will of God respecting them, as it was for Saul to know what it was respecting him. The will of God is the rule of life for all men, and therefore it is as obligatory upon one as upon another to seek a knowledge of it for himself, for, while it is manifestly the will of God that all men should repent and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, it is not always clear what specific work the Lord would have performed by certain individuals. Saul had received a thorough literary education at Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a kind of second Athens, and a theological one at Jerusalem, "under the most eminent doctor of the age and nation, Gamaliel." What, therefore, God would have him to do might differ prodigiously from that which he would have others to do. I think it reasonable to

suppose that Saul had this fact or idea in his mind when he made the inquiry constituting our text; but, with a degree of moral heroism characteristic of the man, and worthy of all imitation, he dared to say, though "trembling and astonished," "Lord, what will thou have me to do?" Are any of you curious to know what were his feelings when the full and final answer came, in the following words : "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God;" you may get some idea of what his feelings were by pondering the burdened sentence : "Who, then, is sufficient for these things?" You see his honest inquiry after the will of God was not disregarded ; but the answer made known to him duties, of whose performance he had not even dreamed. He conferred not, however, with flesh and blood, "was not disobedient to the heavenly vision," but went forth to his work, very soon learning to love that which he had hated, and to labor to build up what he had sought to destroy ; and I do not doubt but that the world, the Church, and even heaven is the richer for his having sought to know

and to do the will of God. How very few, comparatively, are where an honest inquiry after the will of God would bring them?

The will of the parent is always consulted by the affectionate and obedient child, and the will of the employer is the rule of action to the *employé*. Hence the work to be done, as well as the manner of doing it, is not left to the judgment or taste of him who does it, but to his for whom it is to be done. If in these cases the will of others should be consulted and obeyed, surely the will of God should be respecting what we do, and how we do it. With a knowledge of his will, and the faithful doing of it, is linked our usefulness and happiness here and the full enjoyment of the soul in an eternal abode. "Blessed are they that do his commandments," which are but expressions of his will, "that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city." Please remember, however, Saul cannot fight in David's armor, yet he may do it quite as well as David could in his. A practical disavowal of this fact has made a very great deal of mischief in the world, and even in the Church of God. The laymen may as truly be doing the will of God in farming, in the mechanic's shop, or in the merchant's store, as is the minister in his study, at the bedside of the suffering, or in the pulpit, pleading with and persuading men to be recon-

ciled to God. He has ordained a variety of gifts in the Church and in the ministry, and in spirit if not in form one may as well, as truly agree with his will as the other. This fact should teach us the lesson of individual responsibility, or of personal accountability. And when this lesson becomes fully learned by men, then there will be a sincere and thorough seeking after a knowledge of God's will, and his will shall then be done on earth as it is now done in heaven. The great secret of human happiness is found in each individual's faithfully filling the place designated by the great and good Father of all.

What a beautiful scene would such a condition of human society unfold ? How very much would it make earth resemble heaven ? It would constitute a field of beauty and loveliness, in which the most powerful and consecrated intellect might ruminate with the purest delight. But, my brother and sister in Christ, it is not so much our duty to contemplate that field, as it is to labor to help create it by seeking to know and to do God's will.

God is going forth among the nations with the benevolent purpose fixed in his heart to bring the race back to holiness and happiness and himself, and instead of standing aloof and coldly looking on and finding fault with the grand and glorious enterprise, as the many do, let us the rather say, each for himself, "Here, Lord, am I; send me;" and, earnestly

seeking to know in what specific department we should be employed, let us fill it to the best of our ability, and to the glory of his name. But some say it is very difficult to know what is really God's will that we should do. But can it be that he has a will respecting us that he is not willing we should know? Especially, in regard to what we shall be, and what we shall do? I cannot see this to be so, but am convinced that the great difficulty will be found to exist in our own wills, and in loving them so much, that we will not yield them to the control of his. And here, right here, brethren and friends, is manifested our folly and our sins. We sigh for happiness and long for a spiritual life, but reject, by the might of our wills, the only adequate remedy for our misery and groveling position.

We moan in sadness, and burden the winds with our sighs and complaints, and all the while are barring and bolting our hearts against the very approach of influences which would dry up the fountain of our sorrows and irrigate our souls with water from the streams which make glad the city of our God. We murmur at our lot, and yet by the perversity of our own wills, pursue a course directly leading to one that is unrelieved by the presence of any comfort, and rendered cheerless by the absence of the feeblest star. In short, we will think and talk of earth so much, that we fail to listen to the whispers of love,

while heaven and its glories are forgotten, and we drift, we know not whither, just for the want of a willingness to let God, the Great, the Good, and the Wise, will for us. We look out upon society, and behold what sin has done, and what sin is doing, and too frequently say, "It cannot be helped;" or, if some particular individuals were as they should be, there might be room for hope; and it may be, with a heavy sigh, we turn away, and lose sight of their condition, until the knell of death awakens us to the awful fact that they have gone—gone as they lived; gone without salvation. Then we are made to feel that if we had sought to know and do the will of God respecting them, we might have done them good and possibly, have influenced them to live for God and heaven. O, brethren, how many of you have become dwarfed for the want of proper religious exercise! How many, utterly destitute of spiritual enjoyment for the want of a consistent devotion to the will of heaven? The voice of God is still enunciating, "Go work in my vineyard;" and also, "He that reapeth receiveth wages, and gathereth fruit unto life eternal." There is still a place where crowns are worn and palms are given, but they are only worn and borne by those who have toiled up to victory. Let us, then, from this time, go forth asking God, "What wilt thou have me to do?" His approval here, and in the great and trying day; the

good that we may be helped to do unto others, by turning them from sin and ruin, and the completeness of our own happiness in the glorified state, are among the motives which should influence us to come to such determination now.

Time flies, and the roll of years is bearing us on and away from such opportunities of doing the will of God as will bless others. Can we endure the thought of so living as to leave the world no better than we found it? On giving us a being here God gave us a mission also, and in the life and example of his Son we have the strongest indication of its character, in that we are required to be like as he was—in spirit, in labor, in life. How we respect and venerate those noble patriots who linked their destiny with Washington's in fighting the battles of the Revolution, and how do we now look upon the remnant of the noble braves who went forth to help tear from traitor hands the “dear old flag” our fathers gave us, and the States which heads and hearts of treason would have formed into a confederacy for the perpetuity of American slavery? We say, All honor to such men! and pray that peace and plenty and every blessing be upon them and upon their posterity for ever and ever! But we turn from these, and looking upon those who, committing their all to the cause of the despised Nazarene—the cause of humanity in every age and in every clime for all time, and for a

coming eternity—and pronounce the decision just which declares, “They shall be mine in that day when I make up my jewels !” Ah, to be associated with prophets and apostles, with the good of all ages and of all nations, in doing the will of God—this, this is honorable; this is glorious indeed. Dare, then, brethren and friends, to inquire after the will of the Lord. Inquire with a purpose to do it, and you shall be numbered with the good of the past, the present, and of the future, and by and by be assigned a place with the redeemed amid the glories of an eternal heaven.

“Pleasure, and wealth, and praise, no more  
Shall lead my captive soul astray;  
My fond pursuits I all give o'er;  
Thee, only thee, resolved to obey:  
My own in all things to resign,  
And know no other will but thine.”

“I wait thy will to do,  
As angels do in heaven;  
In Christ a creature new,  
Most graciously forgiven:  
I wait thy perfect will to prove,  
All sanctified by spotless love.”

**"HE IS THE ROCK, HIS WORK IS PERFECT."**

—DEUT. xxxii, 4.

THE chapter from which we select our text is styled "The Song of Moses." It constitutes a part of his farewell address to the people whom he had led, and for whom he had legislated many years, and is one of the most beautifully poetic portions of the whole Bible. Both the subject and the occasion combine to make his words eloquently impressive. Although himself constituting a fruitful theme of remark, and furnishing ample material for a large and interesting volume, he seems to be only ambitious to keep himself behind the vail, and, instead of exhibiting himself, to present in sharp and bold relief "the everlasting God;" and by a forcible illustration of his real character, and an allusion to his mighty acts, to elicit their gratitude and inspire their trust. With what force and beauty must the words, "He is the Rock," have fallen on their ears! The thoughts which they would legitimately suggest are those of durability, unchangeableness, shelter or safety, and of a foundation.

Let us, then, briefly consider these thoughts, with the hope that we may be led the more perfectly to adore and trust him. And,

1. *Durability.* “He is the Rock.” As such, God is enduring. We look out upon attractive nature, and linger in sweet, delicious thought among many objects of loveliness; but are pained at the last to behold them passing away. Many of our fathers and mothers, whose forms and movements, whose voices and smiles and counsels and prayers were sources of such interest to us, that we really felt that we could not live without them, have gone down to mingle with the dead; and the solemn thought that our children would be left in orphanage, just as we have been, has put bitterness in the cup of which we were drinking; but, blessed be God! amid all this afflicting evidence of mutation in the objects of our love, we have been assured that there is One who never changes, and will never, no, never, pass away. And thus is it with the hopes that we cherish here, and thus, also, with the things in which we confide and place our trust. For awhile we may seem to be sailing on a quiet sea, with no indication of proximity to hidden, fatal rocks, or the approach of a wreck-breeding tempest. We may be light of heart, gay and gleeful and buoyant with hope, anticipate a safe and delightful passage into a port of plenty and of peace. But such voyages are seldom made without

disaster. Either hidden reefs or unexpected storms whelm us soon or later in ruin ; alas ! too late we learn that only God is worthy the hope and trust of mortals. “He is the Rock,” and, as such, not only endures, but continues ever the same. He is, therefore,

2. *Unchangeable.* Even so, “without variableness or shadow of turning.” We place our thoughts and affections on a multiplicity of subjects and objects here ; and though many of these endure, yet they are so mutable, that we are in perpetual uneasiness about them. The old homes where we were cradled, where mothers sang to us their lullabies, and fathers told us stories of the chase and of war, have been cherished spots ; but O, how sad a thing it has been, and must ever be, to see them change, decay, and pass forever from our sight ! And there are friends we had in youth, they are still our friends, but, alas ! alas ! how changed. Then there was the smooth brow, the full cheek, the brilliant eye, the ruby lip, the sweet musical voice, and the easy, graceful movement of muscle and of limb ; but now, instead, are seen the brow of care, the furrowed cheek, the sunken eye, the enfeebled form, and faltering step ; and now is heard the shattered, unmusical voice. But it is not so with God. The lapse of the eternal years, his love and care for all the creatures he has made, leave no mark of change upon his brow. He

is as great and glorious as ever, and is still as much our friend. Bless his holy name!

But there is another class of the objects of our affections which, from the experiences of the past, we have sadly learned, were subjects of change. I mean those children which God, in goodness, gave us, and then, in mysterious mercy, took from us. We had a little daughter, with eyes of deep, delicious blue, with rosy lips and cheeks, and features all formed in beauty's mold. She stayed with us six months, and seldom cried. She sat alone, and crept. She seemed all soul, excepting a little fleshly screen, to keep it out of sight; but the delicate vehicle in which she had started to run the course of probation was dashed, and we turned in sadness from the wreck, and, lifting our heart, smitten with grief and sorrow, to the changeless God, we found consolation. We had a son, an only son; we called him Willie. He had beautiful curly locks and a broad and manly brow. For fourteen months he was the joy of the home circle, the care and the delight of parents and sisters. How little we thought that vigorous, active form could change into one with the damps of death upon it in less than a day! Yet so it was. Kind friends gathered about, and shed their tears with ours; but it was the changeless Jehovah that sustained and comforted us then. In giving expression to these personal experiences, do I not, my friend

and brother, somewhat represent your own? Have you not, also, discovered that God only is changeless? And that, when you lifted your hearts to him in sorrow, by reason of the changeableness of the objects of your affections here, you were sure to find him ever the same. Do you not know by a blessed experience, that "He is the Rock?" He is such,

3. In the sense of shelter and safety. The psalmist says, "The Lord is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer." "The Lord liveth; and blessed be my rock; and exalted be the God of the rock of my salvation." Of the God-man, Jesus, our Saviour, it was prophesied that he should be "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." The allusion is to long and broad stretches of country, unrelieved by grateful shade of forest or of tree; but here and there a friendly rock, in whose shadow the sun-burned and weary traveler may find both shelter and rest. Now what the rock is to the persons of men, in the case supposed, God is, and will ever be, to the souls that trust in him. Wearied and faint from continued resistance to the fierce and incessant attacks of Satan, the Christian flies to the "rock that is higher than" him, and, finding in the Almighty safety and repose, says, "Be thou my strong habitation, whereunto I may continually resort: for thou art my rock and my fortress." It is from this refuge that he can look forth with

calmness on all his enemies. But finally, on this point, let us consider the term, “rock,”

4. As suggesting the idea of a *foundation*. “He is the Rock.” As such, he is the foundation of the hopes of his people “in all generations.” In various Scriptures this view of God is expressed. Instance, “Upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” The Saviour also expresses this idea in his estimate of the man who built his house upon a rock, and which “fell not, for it was founded upon a rock.” It is said of God’s people that their strength “shall be the munitions of rocks.” The fact that God is enduring and unchangeable, renders him at once worthy our confidence as a foundation. In almost every thing of a worldly nature men are the subjects of disappointment. Their desires and expectations are seldom realized; yet are they accustomed to hope on, for

“Hope springs eternal in the human breast:  
Man never is, but always to be blest;”

but they who build their hopes on God are already blessed. He has never forfeited the confidence of those who have trusted in him. “The foundation of God standeth sure,” and “other foundation can no man lay than that is laid.” In building, it is of the first and greatest importance that a good founda-

tion be secured. Materials for such in many localities have to be brought from a great distance, and involve great cost; but all expense in this direction is considered justifiable, in view of the fact that it adds to the permanence of the structure. Yet how frequently is it the case that even such foundations reveal in a few months, or years, at most, some imperfection which blasts the hopes indulged respecting them. Not so, however, will it be with the hopes of the Church of God, or of any living member of it. God "is the Rock," the foundation upon which the hopes of his people rest, and no imperfection will ever be discovered in him. Incomputable numbers of people in the prolific past, and present likewise, have hoped in God, and not one in the mighty host has had his soul put to shame or his confidence betrayed. And in proportion as this glorious fact shall come to be known and believed will the teeming millions of the coming generations choose the God who "is the Rock" as the foundation of their hopes. Our reason for this view is the availability of this foundation. Persons of all ages and all nations, whether poor or rich, ignorant or learned, black or white, here find "ample room, and verge enough," on which to build their hopes. It is as broad as the wants of humanity, and it extends from the first to the last believing penitent sinner of the race. Here the hopes of our godly fathers and

mothers rested, and here the hopes of our brothers and sisters in Christ who have “passed on before;” and with the multiplication of the number of those who shall rest their hopes on this “Rock,” there shall be increasing incentives to those who shall come after them to do this also. Thus the consistent Christian life and the happy triumphant death of every believer in Jesus has a wonderful tendency to influence others to build their hopes on the same foundation. But the indivisibility or unity of God as a foundation is an item of interest which must not be overlooked. How many there are who hope in the mercy of God, or in his goodness or love, without any reference at all to any of his other attributes or perfections. Such build their hopes of heaven, if the word be allowable in this connection, upon a fragment of the Rock itself—that is, upon an attribute or perfection of God, and not on God himself. “God is merciful,” say they, but continue to live on in all wickedness, not pausing to consider the fact, that if merciful to them, they must be most unthankful and guilty, and that his mercy is only measured by the guilt which it pardons. And thus is it respecting the goodness and the love of God. “O God is good,” say some; “too good to be unkind;” and this is true indeed. But such do not seem to reflect that their obligations to him must be graduated by his goodness to them; and others say, “God is love,”

and this is equally true ; but such do not comprehend the depth nor the intensity of the damnation to which they must be exposed whom the love of God does not win to a life of loving and holy obedience. The intelligent Christian rests his hope for the life of the world that is to come, not upon this or that attribute or perfection of him who “is the Rock,” but upon the one indivisible and incomprehensible Jehovah, in whom are blended in perfect harmony and eternal unity all attributes and perfections. Such, brethren, I trust, is the foundation upon which your souls are reposing. If this be so, you will not surprise us if you sing,

“How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,  
Is laid for your faith in his excellent word !”

My fellow-man and fellow-sinner, allow me to inquire, What is the foundation on which you are resting your hopes of heaven ? Also, I entreat you not to accept of one made of the shifting sands of time while there is solid rock so near and so available. Suffer not, I beseech you, your eternal interests to be jeopardized by vague and erroneous ideas of God, but rather, thoroughly study his attributes, perfections, and character until, from a well-enlightened judgment, and a profound conviction of its truthfulness, you shall be constrained to exclaim, “He is the Rock !” and he shall be my Rock !

Let us now consider the second member of our text—“His work is perfect.”

1. That his work of creation is perfect is everywhere manifested. He who constructs a clock that will measure time correctly for a series of years, simply by being wound up once in twenty-four hours, has attained to a degree of perfection as a mechanic; but he who constructs one that will serve the same purpose as well and as long, by being wound up but once a year, has attained to greater perfection. He who practically solved the problem of transmitting intelligence by electricity from city to city, and from one side of a continent to the other, it was thought, had attained to the perfection of inventive construction; but now that honor is his who succeeded in establishing an enduring pathway of thought between continents and through the mighty deep. But we turn to Him, “who is wonderful in working,” to behold absolute perfection. It is in their perfection that all “his works praise him.” “The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork.” “The works of the Lord are great, sought out of all them that have pleasure therein.” “His work is honorable and glorious,” “He hath made his wonderful works to be remembered.” What perfection do we behold in the sun and moon and stars? And what in the earth, and in the heavens above the earth, and in the waters under

the heavens? With the years of Methuselah and the tutorship of the “first-born sons of light,” we could scarcely more than make a beginning in compassing the perfect works of God. They have their representatives in earth and air and sky, in the world of matter and of mind, in the rose of Sharon and in the lily of the valley, in the sturdy oak, the towering pine, and the enduring cedar, and in man as well as angel.

“Part of thy name divinely stands  
On all thy creatures writ;  
They show the labor of thy hands,  
Or impress of thy feet.”

But, 2. God’s work of redemption is perfect. Whatever difficulties there were in the way of the redemption of man, he, in his wisdom and goodness, overcame; hence the gates of life through which all may enter,

“Stand open night and day.”

As God, in making sunlight for one man, could as easily make it for all men; so, in redeeming one, he could as easily redeem all; and as each man who enjoys the light of the sun has as much of it as he would or could have were there no one else to enjoy it, so the multiplication of the number of the redeemed does not prevent any one sharing in the full and perfect redemption which is by Christ Jesus our Lord. “He tasted death for every man.” How perfect is this work? And the experience of men, as

well as the testimony of the Scriptures, proves its perfection.

“For all my Lord was crucified ;  
For all, for all, my Saviour died.”

In all the results of the work of redemption, so far as we are capable of becoming acquainted with them, we see perfection. Instance : the sinner is perfectly convinced that he is a sinner ; the penitent, believing sinner is freely, fully, and perfectly pardoned ; the hungering and thirsting are perfectly “filled,” and the “faithful unto death,” are eternally and perfectly saved. Come, then, my fellow-man, to this Rock of shelter and of rest. Come and hide you from the fires of sin here, and from those which God hath said should “burn as an oven.” Come now, and you shall know that “God is the Rock,” and that “his work is perfect.” Christian brethren, you have come to him who “is the Rock.” O do not leave him ; but sit beneath his shade, and, as an expression of your great satisfaction and confidence, sing

“Rock of ages, cleft for me,  
Let me hide myself in thee ;”

and occasionally, that you may persuade those who would pass this refuge by, lift up your voice in entreating verse, and sing,

“See from the Rock a fountain rise ;  
For you in healing streams it rolls ;  
Money ye need not bring, nor price,  
Ye laboring, burdened, sin-sick souls.”

But, 3. God's work of providence is perfect. This, as it relates to the inferior animals, is indicated in the beautiful language of our Saviour : "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God !" "Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feedeth them." And, as to his providence over man—the crowning work of his creative power and goodness—he is taught that it is in him he "lives, and moves, and has his being," and that the hairs of his head are all numbered. Now, I know that it is difficult for us to elevate our thoughts to an adequate appreciation of a being exercising such a definite guardianship over man as these declarations of "the Son of God" indicate; but, blessed be God! I am exceedingly happy in the cordial belief of their entire truthfulness. Glory be unto the Father, and unto the Son, and unto the Holy Ghost! that the Christian, with his heart yearning over the sinning, suffering, and sighing ones of earth, may lift his thoughts up to One who has them all before his fatherly eye; and, in an important sense to them, holds them all in his fatherly hand. Respecting those his love has won from transgression into his service and worship, we are told that "the eyes of the Lord are over" them, and that his ears are open unto their prayers; moreover, that "all things work

together for good ;” and even that “our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.” Is it not true, then, that his work of providence is perfect ? But finally,

4. His work of glorification is perfect. This includes the changing of the bodies of “the quick,” or living, as well as the resurrection of the bodies of “the dead.” But it is only the bodies of “his people,” whether quick or dead, that shall be glorified. God tells us by his prophet Isaiah, “I will glorify the house of my glory.” And the context clearly defines his “house” to be “his people.” When this is done, then will the saying of the apostle be true, indeed : “And whom he justified, them he also glorified.” “For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven : if so it be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened : not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life.”

“O glorious hour ! O blest abode !  
I shall be near, and like my God ;  
And flesh and sin no more control  
The sacred pleasures of the soul.”

Here, as soon as we begin to live, we also begin to die ; and all along the pathway of the man who attains to “ threescore years and ten ” his heart is “beating funeral marches” to the tomb ; but, with a glorified body, “fashioned like unto Christ’s glorious body,” the heart shall beat time to an endless song, and thrill with joys eternal. Here the body often becomes weary, and needs and seeks repose ; but there, in its glorified state, it shall be strung with the sinews of immortality, and have employment in which it shall never tire. Here the body, on its way toward dissolution, endures more of pain than were a thousand ordinary deaths ; there “Our Father” informs us, shall be no more pain, neither sorrow nor sighing.

“ O the stars never tread the blue heavens at night ! ” etc.

The soldier, after the wearisome march, or the day of terrible battle, lies down with comparative content, only sheltered from the dews of night or from the drenching rain by the little tent he has carried on his back ; and the hunter tells you of the sweet repose and refreshing slumbers he has had (after the tiresome chase) in the rude cabin which his skill had constructed in a few short hours ; but when these have returned to the more comfortable abode of their fellow-men, they have desired to lodge in as good beds as other citizens. Thus, I have thought,

respecting “the house,” or body, God has given his people to live in here, and the one he will give them to live in where they are to live forever. Here, where our “life is but a span,” and our “age is as nothing,” a fleshly body is sufficiently perfect; but there, where our life-time is to be a forever-coming but never-ending eternity, a more perfect body will be demanded — a body whose members shall fully obey, without any wearisome pain or decay, every dictate of the soul, and be in perfect sympathy with all that soul’s divine impulsions.

We have now given you the thoughts and sentiments suggested by the two declarations respecting God—“He is the Rock, his work is perfect;” and if the meditation of them shall be of as much interest and profit to you as the study of them has been to me, I shall be thankful. May living waters from the Rock, Christ Jesus, largely and sweetly flow to you, and forever bless you!

“At noon, beneath the Rock  
Of ages, rest and pray;  
Sweet is that shelter from the sun  
In weary heat of day.”

“Be thou, O Rock of Ages, nigh!  
So shall each murmuring thought be gone,  
And grief, and fear, and care, shall fly,  
As clouds before the midday sun.”

### CHRIST'S MINISTERS.

"But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."—ACTS xxvi, 16, 17, 18.

CHRIST has reserved the right to select his own ministers. "I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister." This is most appropriate, for the work his ministers have to do is his work. It had its origin in him; and his glory in the salvation of men is the chief object of the Gospel ministry. Now, as this object is never attained, nor even attainable, but by reason of his presence and might, it is, indeed, very proper that he should select the workman. But, whether for these or for other reasons which might be given, or for those with which we have as yet no acquaintance, this has been his practice from the first, and will, doubtless, continue to be until the end of the Gospel dispensation. He makes his selections from the various classes and avocations known among men, and thus all of these

are represented in the Gospel ministry—an arrangement attesting his infinite wisdom and love.

The pride of parents, the judgment of the worldly-wise, and the unsanctified ambitions of the aspiring are all ignored by the great and good "Master;" and from parents who would count it a dishonor to have a son enter the ministry, from among those in whom the eye of the world never discovered any adaptation, and from the humble and unaspiring, Jesus has made ministers who have awakened the world by the thunder of their alarm. Even the Church has not always been able to guess, much less accurately to tell, what a minister any one would become unto whom Christ had appeared for that especial purpose. Hence, in some instances, where the sanction of her voice has been reluctantly given in acknowledging the divine call of some of her sons, our Christ and Lord has made of them "ministers, "mighty in word and deed," even spiritual Samsons, who have borne away the gates of wickedness, and toppled to their ruin many a temple reared to Satan. When lo! the primary actors on these cases have opened their eyes in wonder, and have said above a whisper, "We voted these men their first license!" True, we scarcely dared and hardly meant to, but then we finally did it, and we are now honored by our reluctant action. Surely Jesus knew best, and we are now glad that he has reserved the right to choose his own ministers.

The second thought suggested by the text is, Christ calls men into the ministry who have some experience in the things of God ; for he calls them to witness as well as minister. “ I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness.” Those only who have experienced the power of the Gospel can effectually witness to its power. Unless a man can say, “ I once was blind, but now I see ; I was very wretched, but am now very happy,” he can never lead a soul to Christ. And yet, it is not the order of God to make known unto those men whom he calls into the ministry all the power of the Gospel at once, or at the first. They are to witness to what they have experienced then, and to what they may experience in the future. This is the instructive record—“ To make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee.”

As in nature, God does not give us all the rays of the sun in an instant, but gradually ; nor the rain in solid columns, but in billions of little drops ; so in the revelations of his saving power on human hearts. They come, blessed be his name ! but not all at once. “ The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.” Moses evidently did not fully understand God’s order in this particular when he prayed, “ I beseech thee, show me thy glory.” He had learned something of

God, had tasted that he was good and gracious, and it was very natural for him to desire to know more of him ; but how he came to venture to this degree of solicitude I cannot tell. His request was not granted, yet God caused the glory of “ his goodness to pass before him.” That was as much as Moses could endure or make good use of then. The glory of his greatness and inimitable perfections were withheld until God took him up to his home and throne in heaven ; and I doubt if all of this will ever be revealed to him, even there. Paul had a powerful and rich experience at, and subsequent to, his conversion ; but it was not until a number of years had passed that he was caught up into paradise and heard unspeakable words which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Thus is it now : “The Lord is giving me the most precious seasons here on this bed of suffering that I have ever enjoyed. I had no idea, when in health, that there was such power in religion to sustain the soul in the prospect of death, as I now find.” This was the testimony of Sister. Pettis, after she had had more than twenty years' experience in the things of God, and was given only a few days before she exchanged mortality for life—the cross for the crown.

To do is to experience. He that will do the will of God “shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God.” “Paradise,” it is said, “is always just ahead of the emigrant.” If we “follow on to know the

Lord," we shall know him more perfectly ; and every step we advance we are to drop our testimony for Jesus. Thus we may become "living epistles," increasingly intelligent and powerful witnesses. The testimony of "babes in Christ" is interesting, and we love to hear youthful men preach the Gospel ; but to carry conviction to skeptical minds of its superior value and power, we would sooner trust to the testimony of men who have had long and deep experience in the cause of Christ ; even to aged pilgrims who have been sustained in many conflicts, and who have come out of the last ones shouting, "The best of all is, God is with us," or, "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ!"

Another truth suggested is, Christ will deliver those whom he calls into his service from the impediments which friends or foes may thrust in their way. "Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee." Our blessed Saviour evidently intended to provide a ministry for the world. "The people," that is, the Jews, "and the Gentiles" alike, needed the ministry of just such a man as Paul, and Jesus would even exert his power arbitrarily to give him an open field. This he occupied at once, and "showed first unto them of Damascus, and of Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, . . . witnessing both to

small and great . that Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should show light unto the people, and to the Gentiles." He "conferred not with flesh and blood," and Christ delivered and sustained him. In the light of this fact, difficulty and impediment are words without meaning, or are only sufficient to suggest the idea of triumph to all those who do his will.

Brethren, our unbelief constitutes the mightiest obstacle in the way of an all-prevailing Gospel. O ! had we an implicit trust in its author, and did we live so near to him that our hand of faith might lay itself on his great heart so that we might feel its benevolent throbings for the race, the words *cannot*, *difficulty*, and *failure* would be stricken from our vocabulary ; and, instead, we should be heard to say, respecting the work he gives us to do, "It can, it must, it will be done, for Jesus lives. I feel the beatings of his heart !" O, for such nearness to the source of life and power ! Draw us, God-man, as thou art unto thyself ; then shall we be delivered, sustained, and made to triumph gloriously. But we also have, in this Scripture, a comprehensive view of the grand objects of the Gospel ministry ; and these objects may be very naturally divided into two classes —the preparative and the compleactive. The preparative consists,

1. In the "opening of men's eyes," or in helping

them to behold their danger and their interests. The Jews were in danger of incurring the guilt and the punishment due to those who would tear the diadem of mercy, truth, and love from the brow of Jesus. The Gentiles were in danger of still entertaining the false notions that "Our Father" was exclusively the God of the Jews, and of continuing in their dwarfing and degrading idolatry. The Jews and the Gentiles also had interests, interests in common, but of which both were ignorant ; interests of more value than were globes of gold or a universe of silver. "I send thee, to open their eyes" that they may see that I am, indeed, the sent of God, the true Messiah, and that God is no respecter of persons ; but that "he is good unto all, and rich unto all that call upon his name." Convince them that the Father's grace, like the sunlight and the atmosphere, is especially meant for the world. Do not, however, leave them with only opened eyes ; but,

2. "Turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." Exert yourself, use persuasive force to turn them from wrong-thinking and wrong-doing, to break away from the devil's influence, and to hasten to God ; and as these were the preparative objects of the Gospel ministry in the time of Paul's call to the ministry, they are the same now, the same the world over. To-day and everywhere this preparative work has to be done ; and

acting upon this fact, churches are erected and beautified, that the many may be drawn to the preaching of the everlasting Gospel.

As to the completest objects of the Gospel ministry, we remark they are two: First, "the forgiveness of sins;" second, "an inheritance among them which are sanctified." Both, however, are consequent on men's seeing their danger and interests, and turning "from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God." *Imprimis*, the "power of Satan," establishes the fact of his existence. Power is the result of being. Where there is no being there can be no power. As men were to be turned "from the power of Satan unto God" in St. Paul's time, so are they to be turned from his power in our time. Some have believed that they would live to see the devil die, but none have attained to that age as yet. Should such an event occur, doubtless the intelligent universe will very soon know and appreciate the fact. "That they may receive forgiveness of sins." Bless the Lord! He has something good for those who turn unto him. The "forgiveness of sins!" than which a sweeter note never fell on ear of mortal. Behold that sinful, guilty one! His eyes are opened, and he sees and feels as never before his proximity to hell. How the recollections of the past thunder through his soul! He would fly from himself, but he cannot. Hell has risen up to his heart,

its fires are burning there. Shall we go and tell him that he must, absolutely must, suffer on, and on, until, by suffering, his sins shall be expiated? No, a thousand times no! God hath given us for him another message. The Gospel which we preach breathes good-will toward men, authorizing us to proclaim pardon for the guilty, life for the dead, and salvation for the lost. Ours, brethren, is evidently a Gospel of salvation and not of damnation, and we have great confidence that it will yet heal the wounds of the soul, and drive away the woes of a sin-stricken race. But,

3. There is also an “inheritance among them which are sanctified.” Forgiveness of sins is a great good; so great as to fully justify all that ever has, or ever could be, done to seek and accept it; but an “inheritance among them which are sanctified” is a much greater good. The one to the other is as the dawning light of morning to noon-day splendor, or as John Baptist was to Jesus. An “inheritance!” not bounded by lines of latitude and longitude; not mapped off on canvas, so that the eye can sweep it and the finger can easily follow its lines; but an inheritance whose center is the everlasting throne, and whose circle is the girdle of the divine ubiquity. Its character is indicated by its associations. It is “among them which are sanctified.” It is, therefore, in good society. Were we to come into the posses-

sion of ever so large an inheritance here, it must necessarily be in the midst of a mixed society—a society of the evil and the good. But all are good in heaven. If here, it might be in a sickly region; but the inhabitants of that country never say, "I am sick." Indeed, were we to have the privilege of selecting one here, we could locate it in no place where the people do not, and where we should not also, die; but among them that are sanctified death never comes.

"There everlasting spring abides."

Finally, the Scripture suggests the importance of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. The glorious objects of the Gospel ministry, nay, of all evangelical labor, can only be secured by faith in our Lord Jesus, the living Head of the Church. Hence he says, "By faith that is in me." He that would labor to open men's eyes, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, must labor in faith. Moreover, he who has been brought to this experience by the work of faith must himself believe in Christ, or he will never receive the higher experience of the "forgiveness of" his "sins, and" an "inheritance among them which are sanctified." May a ministry, a witnessing ministry of Christ's selecting, never be wanting to preach the Gospel in this community nor in these lands, until the people, all the people, shall have "their eyes opened," and be

turned “from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God !”

Happy, glorious day ! By faith I behold it coming. The star which heralds it has arisen, and beautiful gleamings of celestial light are throwing their radiance on the receding darkness. Sometimes I think that I catch the mingling notes of victory, and see, or seem to see, the millions in the great brotherhood, raised up by the power of the Gospel into a region of holiness and peace, and bathed in a sea of glory, and bound and held together by the magnet of divine Love, going forth to the possession of their “inheritance among them which are sanctified,” keeping time to the song : “ Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father ; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.” Amen.

“O glorious hour! O blest abode!  
I shall be near, and like my God;  
And flesh and sin no more control  
The sacred pleasures of the soul.”

## PAST AND PRESENT STATE OF BELIEVERS.

"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins."—EPH. ii, 1.

THIS Scripture suggests the past and the present state of believers. The past is indicated by the words, "were dead;" and the present by the phrase "you hath he quickened."

We propose the consideration of both. The past first; and the present secondly.

I. "Who were dead." This figure is a strong one, but facts justify the use of it.

In the physical world a dead body arrests the attention, awakens an interest, and secures the sympathy of the living. They gather around it, and often make great lamentation over it. A soul "dead in trespasses and sins" commands the attention of the ever living God, the liveliest interest of angels, and the most earnest sympathy on earth. In the former case life would be restored if the living could give it, but the feeling that they cannot give birth to another feeling is kindred to despair; in the latter case there is hope, for in the results of such attention, interest, and sympathy the great truth is established, that living Christians may be made of spirit-

ually dead sinners; for all real Christians are converted sinners and have become new creatures in Christ Jesus. But there are a number of interesting analogous points between the dead physically and the dead spiritually.

1. The former "have eyes, but they see not." The slow and measured tread of friends, who come near them, and linger there in sadness, is not discovered. Beautiful tributes of affection, placed with tender hands in love's array, baptized with tears, and scented with the aroma of devoted love, take their place upon the brow, or over the heart, without meeting a look of recognition. A world of beauty may surround them, but to the dead it is all a blank. Thus is it with the dead spiritually. God "the one who is altogether lovely" comes near them, but "the eye of their understanding being darkened" they do not behold him. He enshrouds himself in the drapery of an earthly tabernacle, and comes in dyed garments from Bozrah, emitting the perfume of the wine-press and the odor of "the mountain of spices," and all of this as an exhibition of his interest for the dead, but their vision does not apprehend him. At most he is but as "a root out of a dry ground," having "no form or comeliness that we should desire him."

2. The physically dead have "ears, but they hear not." Their names are uttered and repeated—their virtues talked of, and multiplicity of reasons urged

to make it appear that the departed should have lived longer; but the ears of the silent sleeper hear and heed them not. The birds of song come and sing by the trellised window, and voiceful nature sends forth her full-toned melodies, and the music of the spheres still goes on; but he sends back to these no smiles of joy, for death has closed the ears of the sleeper now. Thus is it with the spiritually dead—the “dead in trespasses and sins.” The story of the cross, ever wonderful and ever new to others’ ears, is repeated to them from early youth to ripened manhood; the love-bearing messages of the everlasting Gospel, and the deep-toned solicitude burdening every prayer of believers with the triumphant rejoicings of those who die into a life eternal, are unheeded and unheard. News from hell and heaven are alike disregarded. The wailings of the lost, as well as the almost bewildering melodies of the redeemed, fail to penetrate their moral sense and to secure their earnest thought.

3. The physically dead are powerless for the accomplishment of good. Husbands look upon the lifeless forms of their wives, and wives upon those of their husbands, and the painful conviction is felt that all their kind offices have ceased. Children gather about the lifeless remains of their parents, and parents around those of their children, and, in either case, a dependence is felt to be gone, and a grief too

large for utterance rests upon the heart. The helping hand, the willing feet, the approving eye, the cheerful voice—in short, all, all these offices originating in the hearts of those who love to do and suffer for the weal of others, are destroyed, and the survivors feel that the world has grown poor by just so much as these were in the habit of supplying. Thus it is respecting the spiritually dead. They are powerless for “the work of faith—for the labor of love.” Objects of want throng them, but they cannot see them; pleadings for help are uttered, but they do not hear them; millions are perishing, but their hearts are not moved with pity toward them; and the only solution to the awful problem is found in the fact, that they are dead “in trespasses and sins.”

II. Such was the condition of every believer. Such was your condition who do now rejoice in a new life, which is “hid with Christ in God.” You remember the dawn—the beginning of that life. Spiritual sensibility was the commencement. For as a dead body cannot resurrect itself, so is it impossible for souls “dead in trespasses and sins” to “quicken” or bring themselves into the life of God. But as a dead body restored to life and sensibility may, by volition, remain motionless, never arise, nor perform a physical act so with souls “quickened” into sensibility. They may, for multitudes have and still do, remain inactive as to the discharge of the various duties which

they owe to God and to human society. The present condition of believers, then, involves something more than spiritual sensibility. As a man restored to life must will to see, to hear, to taste, and to feel; as he must will to move and to do, if any of these senses are to be gratified, or if any thing worthy of a man shall be accomplished; so the soul "dead in trespasses and sin" brought back to spiritual sensibility, must will to rise above the region of spiritual death, where it can look out upon moral obligations, hear the sweet strains of mercy floating out from the glorious cross, and taste of the good words of life, freighted with the "fat things full of marrow," to nourish the soul and make it strong to run in the way of holiness. "You hath he quickened!" I seem to see you, Christian brethren, when the power which brought you to spiritual sensibility reached your dead souls. It was the hour of deep and of keen conviction, of thorough awakening—the hour when God said again, "Let their be light!" When you looked out, and saw your fearful proximity to perdition—when you heard the ceaseless dashings of its fiery billows—when filled with self-loathing and great fear for your personal safety—the Spirit of the Lord directed your gaze to Christ crucified, and you looked and lived. I seem to see you when the tumult within you was hushed, and your souls became calm at the speaking of those words of Jesus, "Peace, be still," and you sat

down at his feet, clothed and in your right minds. O ! what a quickening was that ! It sent you forth with joy-beaming eyes, with love-telling lips, and with souls full of blessing. You wept over the straying, kindly spoke to them of the love of Jesus, and wrestled in prayer for their salvation. You saw some of these irresistibly awakened or “ quickened ” into spiritual sensibility, and then you stretched forth helping hands and were successful in leading them to God through Christ. Then, if not before, you saw that God had connected your spiritual life with the spiritual life of others ; and that, while in some sense he arbitrarily awakens men, he nevertheless employs the living Christian to conduct others to the source of that life. Then you esteemed it a privilege and an honor to work in God’s vineyard. It was your meat and drink to do the will of God ; and it is so yet, if you are still “ quickened ” or still alive in him, your living Head. Brethren, what has not this quickening, spiritual, life-producing power wrought in this world of death ? What will it not yet accomplish ? The history of the Church is but a record of its wonderful achievements ! The lifting up of the cross in heathen lands is but the earnest of its universal diffusion, and the singing of “ the new song ” on the other shore is but an eloquent testimony to its being the great and grand regenerator of the race.

Sinner, you have been made to feel the presence of this life element. It may be that God sees that you feel it now. If so, please do not, for your soul's sake, defer to make it known to some sympathizing Christian friend. A farther and to you more glorious quickening may, nay absolutely does, depend on your doing so ; while upon this more glorious quickening hinges your usefulness in time, your triumph in the dying hour, and your reception into the "everlasting kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ." Surely these, with your past and present sensibility, must be regarded as highly desirable. These include every object worthy the aspiration of an immortal soul, and link it with the aggressive movements and mighty victories of an all-conquering arm. Remember that God and the quickened soul alive in him are always in the majority. Come, then, in your weakness and feebleness, come and make the cause of God your own, and he will fully quicken and empower you to

"Fight the good fight, and win at length  
Through mercy an immortal crown."

"Come, for all else must fail and die,  
Earth is no resting-place for thee ;  
Heavenward direct thy weeping eye ;  
I am thy portion—Come to me."

## NECESSITY OF THE NEW BIRTH.

“Ye must be born again.”—JOHN iii, 7.

THE utterances of Christ are authoritative, and they are equally and universally so. They are also truthful, equally and universally truthful. The one constituting our text is as authoritative and truthful as any he ever spake. He knew man in his original purity, in his terrible defection and fall, in the perversity of his will, affections, and judgment; yet, with this knowledge of man, he declares that he “must be born again.” Hence the nature and the necessity of the new birth will have our thought in this discourse. As to the nature, we remark,

I. It is enlightening. Hence the subject of it looks upon himself in a new light. Nothing is more common than for unconverted persons to entertain false and erroneous views of themselves—of their own moral condition, and their utter inability of themselves to make it better. Ignorant of the strength of habit, they form those which grow with their growth until they become bound to them as with fetters of iron, and they are constrained to say, “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me?”

Such, also, have new views of God—of his character and perfections; of his law, and of its infinite sanctions; of providence and grace; of the Gospel, with its vast provisions; of the Spirit, and of its wonderful ministrations; of the Son, and of the object of his mission into this world of sin and of death. Such have also new views of the present and the future; of time and of eternity; of heaven, earth, and hell; of probation and retribution; of man's accountability, and of his endless destiny. It is from such that the confession is wrung—

“I loathe myself when God I see  
And into nothing fall;”

and from whom the humble prayer ascends: “Please, God, for Christ’s sake, have mercy on me, and henceforth use me for thy glory. ‘Not my will, but thine, O God, be done.’” Now, how is this? Why is this? The only truthful answer is found in the fact that light has penetrated the dungeon of the soul, and it has become the subject of divine illumination. Such look no longer down upon their fellow-man, but up to him, and call him brother. The Christianity of the New Testament makes its subjects one in Christ, inspires them with the same blessed hope, arms them with like precious faith, and puts them in possession of the excellent knowledge of Christ Jesus the Lord.

II. The new birth is exalting. How could it be otherwise? The new and hallowed associations in which the soul now mingles, the holy aspirations of which it is the subject, the glorious hopes which it cherishes, while the new and noble and holy objects of pursuit presented, all conspire to lift it above its former condition, and to ally it to angels and to God. Note the fact,

1. That it is exalted in thought. Once thoughts the most vile and lascivious, earthly, sensual, and devilish, filled the mind, and were cherished there. Now, though occasionally suggested, they are promptly dismissed, turned straight out of doors, and, in Jesus' name, adjured to depart at once.

2. It is exalted in affection. Once the soul sent out her affections downward, and they fastened on the creature, but now they rise and tower and mount to the heavens—they grasp immortality and glory—they fasten upon principalities and powers, on thrones, and on God. All her precious things are now in heaven, and we hear her sing of them—

“There is my house and portion fair;  
My treasure and my heart are there,  
And my abiding home;  
For me my elder brethren stay,  
And angels beckon me away,  
And Jesus bids me come.”

3. It is also exalted in purpose. Once what it had of purpose was resolvable into self; but now it goes

forth on swift and joyous wing in search of subjects of want, with the purpose and the resolve to relieve them of misery, with the desire to make them happy. Of moral death ; with the high determination to bear to them the elixir of life, while with a bold hand it subscribes to the doctrine — “No man liveth unto himself.” But, furthermore,

III. The new birth is bliss-giving, soul-cheering, and soul-sustaining. In the dark day it used to fold its wings and moan in sadness, but now it stretches its pinions, and, rising above the darkening cloud, it bathes its plumage in the flood of life beyond. For such a soul there is always sunshine, and the secret of finding it is with her. The range of its vision is not bounded by lines of latitude or of longitude, for it sweeps the earth and the heavens. Science and revelation are both laid under tribute to it, and are made to minister to its joys. Yet not from external objects does such a soul draw its largest draughts of bliss. God, the infinitely happy one, reigns there, dwells there ;

“ And where he vital breathes  
There must be joy.”

The subjects of grace, whether on earth or in heaven, in nature are the same.

“ They sing the Lamb in hymns above,  
And we in hymns below.”

The nature of the new birth involves all this. Hence we notice,

IV. The necessity of the new birth. This might be argued from various considerations ; we shall notice only a few. And,

1. Man's moral state. That is, his moral state previous to regeneration. This is inconsistent with real happiness. The experience of the world demonstrates this. Now, our Father in heaven evidently designs the happiness of his creatures, and, but for sin, this world would be a paradise indeed. Universal happiness has been prevented by universal sin, and as this sin has its seat and center in man's mental and moral constitution, a radical change in said constitution is absolutely essential to his happiness. This we call the new birth. As it is in vain that you attempt to convey to the man who never heard a sound any appreciable idea of the melody of song, or to him who was born blind the scenes of beauty and of loveliness, thrown by the hand divine in grand profusion above, beneath, and all around him, so as to make his heart to bound with delight as yours have done ; so it is impossible for man, or even for God, to make those really happy whose moral natures do not harmonize with the principles of his government. For as the deaf wake not to the melodies of nature, and as the blind are not moved by the ever-varying scenes of beauty surrounding them, so the

heart of man, unrenewed, is absolutely incapable of deriving happiness from the strains which come from Calvary, or from the ever-blooming fields of promise inviting the gaze and admiration of the spiritually enlightened. And as even the glorious sunlight is only pleasant to the eye in a perfect state, so the shinings of our heavenly Father's face and the scintillations of love divine thrown out from the wondrous cross are, and can only be, appreciated by hearts renewed in righteousness and true holiness. And yet unconverted men wonder and wonder why they are not happy. It is far more wonderful that they are not utterly miserable. Their moral natures are so much out of tune, that neither in the bass, tenor, soprano, nor alto do they harmonize with heavenly or godly natures, and never can, until taught and drilled in the school of Christ. Man's moral nature must be subjected to moral discipline and be yielded to moral control before it can receive enjoyment from contact with, or the contemplation of, moral objects and pure associations. Now, as these are pressed on his attention, and in some sense attach to him, his happiness depends on the production of a perfect affinity. This, according to the teaching of God's word, and the experience of his people, can only be effected by his being "born again."

Here we might rest the case, as the argument already employed must be immovable; but as there is

another at hand, found in the text itself, we will employ that also. Then, from the decision of Christ, "Ye must be born again," we argue its necessity. I know that wicked and skeptical men appeal from this decision, and seek to substitute something (else) in place of the new birth; some one thing, and others another, while others still, with Nicodemus, say, "How can this thing be?" and live on and pass toward the judgment and the fearful retribution of eternity in endless doubts, professedly, because they cannot understand how the work is to be wrought. Others construct a theory, and persuade themselves to believe that its development will evolve a happiness as great as is good for man in this world, and which shall secure to him the companionship of angels in heaven. Some seek to deal justly with their fellow-men, and pride themselves on this, until they seem to have utterly forgotten that they had to do with God as well as men, and die with the awful reflection — though we have never intentionally wronged our fellows, yet we are going into the presence of a God whose claims we have set at naught, and the glance of whose eye shall flash conviction of our guilt forever on our souls: and on the breaking verge of the yawning gulf, and above the roar of the endless storm, they hear and believe, but, alas! alas! too late, that the decision of Christ was just and true and eternal when he said, "Ye must be born again."

This is no fancy picture, no creature of the imagination, but it is in fact a very poor portraiture of the terrible reality. And yet unrenewed men dream of happiness and heaven, trifle with time and life, those sacred, solemn trusts, and dance their way down to the grave, or stop their ears and sneeringly laugh during the pleadings and intercessions of the Son of God. It is possible some who shall read this are among the number.

Does this suggestion surprise you? And shall I be called over-bold because I tell you this truth? Does not the decision of Jesus, as given in the text, protect me? And does it not settle the great fact that men may be rich and respectable and learned and influential, and still be unhappy? It must be so, for he was never mistaken. He knew what was in man. Our thoughts lie open to his view. The germ of every desire and purpose of our hearts comes within the range of his omniscient glances; yet, with this most perfect knowledge of us, and of the laws that govern happiness and mind; with a perfect knowledge of our high capabilities for enjoyment, and of the intense mental sufferings of which we are capable, he says, "*Ye must be born again.*" Your spiritual life depends upon it; your happiness and your heaven.

My brother man and brother sinner, give, O give this truth your immediate and most earnest and

prayerful attention. Ask for the grace which saves from sin, ask for the power that converts the heart, nor cease asking till the light and peace and joy of the new birth are yours. Nor then cease, but use the new power thus acquired in bringing others into the blessed kingdom of grace, and instrumentally aiding them in getting ready for the kingdom of glory.

“The kingdoms are but one.”

Would you forever live in the department above, you must press into the department below. May the ever-helping Spirit aid you in a struggle for a new and higher life in Jesus, and crown you at last with life eternal, for his sake! Amen.

“ Come Holy Ghost, my heart inspire,  
Attest that I am born again;  
Come, and baptize me now with fire,  
Nor let thy former gifts be vain:  
I cannot rest in sins forgiven;  
Where is the earnest of my heaven?  
  
Where the indubitable seal,  
That ascertains the kingdom mine?  
The powerful stamp I long to feel—  
The signature of love divine;  
O shed it in my heart abroad,  
Fullness of love, of heaven, of God!”

## CHRIST DIED FOR US

“For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.”—1 THESS. v, 9, 10.

GOD never expresses opinions, but facts, truths. Thus was it with all who spake or wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Their mission was to pour forth truths revealed to them by Jehovah; to faithfully record facts as to the government and purposes of God respecting the race. Our text is a forcible and beautiful illustration of this principle in the divine proceedings. There is no ambiguity nor circumlocution here, but a simplicity and directness of utterance, revealing at once the truths, the facts, to the mind's comprehension, and, but for the perversity of the human heart, and the extreme reluctance with which it accepts of truths not allied to its own nature, there would be little need of more than a simple utterance of them to each individual; but as the case is, “Line upon line, precept upon precept,” is found to be necessary. And, even after this pains-taking, should the soul of the sinner so hear as to heed and live, the result justifies the effort, and crowns it with honor and with glory. How full of mercy, truth, and grace is the enunciation, “God

hath not appointed us to wrath ?” How infinite, as a source of encouragement and hope to the sinful, rebellious, and guilty ! With what telling force and animating charm and power must it address itself to minds despondent and desponding, struggling under a weight of sin—struggling with increasing weakness, too, to throw off the load upon it, to break the chains, self-forged, which bind and hold it down.

“ Not appointed us to wrath.” Sinner, does not this announcement throw a ray of hope across your soul, and awaken you, so that you can see your God and Father even challenging your faith, your trust ? Ay, sinner, God in Christ is not against but for you. Unrepenting, unbelieving, you are against your God, against yourself, against your happiness here and in heaven. In agreement with God, you will find your happiness and heaven, and nowhere else but there. “ Not appointed us to wrath.” No, for you are the subject not of a vengeful but of a graciously benevolent appointment, decree, or purpose, having been “ appointed to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.”

This appointment was made in an early period of the history of our race, and was worded thus, “ The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head.” A later version thus : “ The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come ; and unto him shall the gathering

of the people be.” This merciful purpose or appointment, deeply fixed in the heart of God, is seen cropping out, ever and anon, along the line of the former dispensation, fitting the race for its grand and glorious development in the new, when a child should be born, and a son should be given, and the government of this purpose or appointment should be upon his shoulders: and when, by his authority, an angel should fly through the midst of heaven, having this truth: “The Gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth.”

“To obtain salvation.” How much the race needed it! How much it needs it still! “Darkness,” mental and moral, covered the earth, and gross darkness the people—that is, the Jews; for even the Jews failed to fathom the merciful and gracious import of the coming Saviour, and were only elated at his approach while the illusion of temporal deliverance flitted before them. When this was broken by the announcement, “My kingdom is not of this world,” they were ready to crucify “Jesus of Nazareth,” and make of themselves “vessels of wrath fitted for destruction.”

“To obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.” Strange utterance, and significant as strange, and strange because of its significance. The middle, or partition, wall is to be broken down, in fact, is already demolished, and the Gentiles are invited to

immunities equal to the Jews ; yes, to infinitely more than Jew had even dreamed or hoped for. For is it not "a faithful," that is, just and true, "saying, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners," and this saying, which is "worthy of all acceptance," of acceptance by all, has reached the Gentiles, and is practically illustrated by the rapturous joys of converted Jew and Gentile, as with willing heart and lip and voice they pour forth on listening ears, "God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ?" Ours, in common, and not to the exclusion of any in equal need of such a Saviour. Glory be to God ! who thus provides for the family of man a Saviour for every man in the family, so that every member can say, "Our Lord Jesus Christ." But mark the appointment. It is "to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." Here is the source of salvation, here the fountain, whose issuing stream is rolling its life-tide over the nations. But it comes not to man, in its cleansing, saving power, unexpectedly, unsought, or unimplored. We must come to it "to obtain," experience, and enjoy the health and life which it imparts. And do you not hear Him, who has the disposal and direction of this stream of life, saying, in pleading, heavenly tones, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters;" "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink;" and, "Come, for all

things are now ready.” O it is in coming to “Christ Jesus the Lord” that we “obtain salvation,” coming to him in penitence and faith, that we find him “waiting to be gracious.” It is in coming to him whole-heartedly that we obtain access to the fountain and power to bear away on our souls marks of a divine purifying. To do this costs an effort, sometimes magnified into a struggle, compelled by an utter sense of helplessness; but the pearl of salvation thus obtained is cheap at any price. But the ground of all difficulty in finding it is always in ourselves, and not in the Lord Jesus Christ; for that we might obtain salvation by him, “He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death,” and not despising us in our low estate, but fixing his eyes and heart of infinite regard upon us,

“He flew to our relief.”

Behind him was heaven, with its eternal song; before him was hell, with its ceaseless waiting: behind him were ranks of loving, obedient, and adorning ones; before him were myriads of sinful and sinning men: behind him was the throne of thrones, with no one there to dispute his right to rule and reign, and to receive honor and glory and thanksgiving and blessing; before him was a world which, though made by him, is united and in league with hell to dispute his authority, and to persecute him to the

death : behind him is the glory that he had with the Father before the world was ; before him a morally desolate waste, in which he should find no place to lay his head : behind him was the floating, soothing melody of the minstrelsy of bliss ; before him the horrid oaths, the imprecations, blasphemies, and curses of those he goes to save. O what a heart must have been his to court such shame, to stoop so low, to come from the regions of light and life, into the dominions of darkness and of death ! Yet this he did, and more, too, for he shrouded his divinity in the drapery of an earthly tabernacle ; he veiled his ineffable brightness and glory with the nature, purely human, that he took upon himself, thus tempering the brightness and the glory to the strength of the eyes that were to behold him. And more still did he do, for he lifted the veil from the human heart, and let shine upon it the glorious sunlight of truth. From his lips dropped words of fire, so that those who listened to them afterward said, “Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scriptures ?” And still more did he do. Communicating his own Spirit unto certain chosen ones for the purpose, they found themselves with a necessity laid upon them “to preach his Gospel,” and, being endued with power from on high, not only “kings of armies did flee apace, and she that tarried at home divided the

spoil," but the "common people heard them gladly," so that "the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved." That is, a powerful, glorious, and continuous revival of religion was instituted and inaugurated, which, culminating at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, swept three thousand from the ranks of sin and carried them into the comforting, nourishing bosom of the Church of God.

These all "obtained salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ," then, scattering abroad, like the rays of light from the sun's source, a revival influence was soon diffused, bearing its increasing thousands to the feet of our Immanuel as trophies of his redeeming grace. And farther, wider, has this influence spread. Millions upon millions of the race, up-borne by its matchless, constraining force, have been safely landed upon the rock of celestial prospect, having obtained salvation "by our Lord Jesus Christ;" and millions upon millions more are now and will continue to be gathering there, until an "innumerable multitude, which no man can number," shall assemble around our Jesus as their King, and

"Crown him Lord of all."

"Who died for us." In our place instead of us. O what love is here! How wonderful, both in degree and value! Who could compute its worth? He "died for us." And what a death was that—and

fraught with consequences, how amazing ! From it flows the life of the world. Yes, brethren, we live, and the race lives, by the death of the Son of God. How pure and spotless, then, should be our lives ! How perfectly consecrated to Jesus ! How they should show forth his praise ! How they should magnify his grace, "who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him !" How benevolent was the object, "that, whether we wake or sleep"—that is, whether we are alive or dead at his second coming—"we should live together with him !" "Live together with him ?" The people of God, then, are not to be separated in heaven. There will be no sectarian divisions there, and no denominational inclosures there. The different branches of the Church on earth shall commingle and be blended into one in heaven. No wickedly ambitious rivalry shall be there. No fawning, proselyting, sycophantic spirit shall be there. Vieing there may be, but if so, it will be for the worthiest praise, the greatest homage with which to greet him, "who died for us."

Christians on earth only harmonize as Christ lives in them ; the more Christ is in them the greater their harmony, fellowship, and communion. Hence, in heaven, these will be perfect, because Christ shall dwell in them then, fully and eternally. He shall be at once the source and center of their life—an

ever-present, vital force ; an immortal, sustaining, and cementing power ; and an everlasting flowing fountain of joy, delight, and gladness.

This subject suggests two practical thoughts :

1. That our first business as sinners is to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ.
2. That we should so adorn our Christian life here that we may be accounted worthy to live with Christ and the good in heaven.

“ So, o'er and o'er, and o'er and o'er,  
The cherubim  
And seraphim,  
With one accord the praises sing  
Of One who dies and lives again,  
And they with Him.  
There shining temple gates ajar  
Gleam like a star,  
And, back of glory, merged into a greater glory,  
A glory such as human heart  
Hath ne'er conceived,  
Towering sublime,  
Yet comforting,  
Benediction-like, the pierced hands outstretching,  
Is the One  
Of whom they sing the wondrous story.”

## THE LOST SAVED.

"For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."—LUKE xix, 10.

IT is said that the great and good Dr. Alexander Beckoned a brother minister to come near him just before he breathed his last, and that he whispered into his ear these memorable words, "My theological creed is narrowed down to this: 'Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.'" And who will presume to say that he was not orthodox? Must he not have taken his creed from the Bible? Is there not in it a very marked relationship to our text: "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." As there can be but one opinion on that point, let us consider,

### I. In what sense man was lost.

1. He was lost beyond the power to save himself, for he was lost by sinning. The law which was given him to obey was "holy, just, and good." Obedience to it was reasonable, in view of the fact that the greatest happiness of its subjects would thereby be secured. Man transgressed that law, and, in doing so, not only lost his happiness, but involved himself in guilt, and awoke to the fact that he was

lost in misery. As, by taking an active poison into the stomach, that organ is not only affected, but also all other organs and members of the body; so sinning not only involved Adam and Eve in guilt and misery, but their offspring in depravity, on the principle that a bad tree cannot produce good fruit. Hence it is that the race is depravedly lost, and that "there is none" who do naturally "seek after God." Surely, they who are thus lost, are lost beyond the power to save themselves. The self-ruined can never be self-saved. In possession of a depraved nature, "the imaginations of the thoughts are evil, and only evil continually," while "the heart," the receptacle of the moral poison, "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."

Infant purity and infant innocence are not synonymous terms. A child may be depraved, and yet be innocent; but it cannot be pure and at the same time depraved. If it be depraved, it will sin as sure as it lives to know good and evil, unless an influence out of and above itself acts upon it, so as to prevent its sinning. This, thank God! may be the case; but if so, the child has not saved itself, but owes its salvation to another. If, then, children are so lost in depravity as to be unable to save themselves, who shall be found competent to save himself whose depravity has been allowed to run forth in streams of wicked thought and feeling, of sinful words and actions?

"Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Had we never in infancy, youth, or manhood seen an exhibition of evil passion, or heard the utterance of an improper word, or beheld the performance of a wrong act, we should have differed from our present selves amazingly. But there is no place on earth where men and women may be reared under such circumstances. On the contrary, they are from the first thrown among the petulant, the deceptive, and not unfrequently among the profane and the obscene. At best, they are among a mixture of evil and good, where the evil is greatest, boldest, and most persistent in its efforts to be and to live.

2. Men are lost through social corruption, and are therefore lost beyond the power to save themselves. We remember reading of a member of our Church in the West, who was asked, "How can you vote for Mr. G., or use your influence in any way to secure his election to Congress, as it is so well known that he does not believe in the existence of a hell?" He replied, "I want him to go to Washington for that purpose; for, if he does not believe in a hell after being there one term, then it will prove to be a very different place from what I have taken it to be." Should any one doubt the correctness of our views, as to the extent to which we believe them to be lost,

they have but to try to save themselves to become convinced that we are in the right. Powerful and seductive as is the influence of evil, God has so connected "the wages of sin" with the love and practice of it, that men are constantly advised, warned, and urged to abandon it. This they think, and resolve to do, especially when they see the end to which the course they are pursuing has brought others, and they set about it, but it is in their own strength, and they fail, and failing, they conclude it cannot be done.

How many such are in every community? How many in almost every congregation? To any one who may belong to this class I have a word of encouragement. It is this: what it is utterly impossible for you to do, it is possible, nay, even easy, for God to do for you. The more you try to save yourselves the more you will be convinced that you are lost beyond the power to ever do so; but instead of despairing or desponding, call to mind the glorious truth that "the Son of man is come to seek and to save" you. That, lost as you are, you are not worthless. That, to help you, "to seek and to save" you, the Son of God became "the Son of man." Lost as you are, you are not lost as were "the angels which kept not their first estate," and abode not in the truth, and are "reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day," for to none

of them has the Son of man come “to seek and to save” them. They are, therefore, “suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” And yet how do men treat this Gospel proclamation? Think you, that these lost angels would have treated it as you have done, and still are doing, had it been sent to them? Nay, indeed, they would the rather have rolled a thanksgiving anthem up to heaven, which might have shaken the earth on its way. “The Son of man is come!” This grand event, which was the burden of prophecy, the desire of the nations, and which kings and prophets longed to behold, and angels and a multitude of the heavenly hosts sung, and which “the wise men” and “the shepherds” celebrated, is a perpetual verity, a living joy.

“Joy to the world! the Lord is come;  
Let earth receive her King;  
Let every heart prepare him room,  
And heaven and nature sing.”

Who shall estimate the value or who compute the worth of souls, lost though they are, which the Son of man is come to seek and to save? The value of the sun, as the source of light and heat to our earth, is great, but the time hastens when the sun shall be blown out, and “the earth and the works therein” shall be by

“Raging flames destroyed;” but the soul shall rise  
“Above the fiery void,” and secure in her own existence, “remain a thing of life forever.”

Immortality is its birthright. The sun knows nothing and feels nothing. The earth of itself is cold and fruitless. The soul knows and thinks and reasons and remembers and suffers and rejoices, and is also lit up with the fires of eternal existence, therefore “the Son of man is come to seek and to save” it. Is the inquiry made, “How does he seek it?” We answer, His way of seeking is his own, for it was self-suggested. He sends man to man, making his happiness here and in heaven to depend on the faithful utterance and needed warning. Hence the apostle says, “Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ’s stead, be ye reconciled to God.” Mark, it is not on the success of those whom the Saviour employs to seek the lost that their happiness depends, but on their faithfulness. Therefore he adds, “We are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life.” There is a mutual responsibility on those who seek and those who are sought. In every faithful sermon, in every earnest exhortation, in every fervent prayer and sigh which comes from a burdened heart on your account, and in every yearning desire that follows you in your darkening pathway, “the Son of man” is seeking for you.

You have listened to the stranger minister, and

have wondered at the solicitude which has swelled his heart and trembled upon his lips, which has glowed in his eye, and thrilled in tones of pathetic earnestness in his voice ; and you have thought why is this, and how is this ? The explanation is found in the fact that “the Son of man,” by his Spirit, was in his servant, seeking you. Again you have seen an unusual seriousness resting on the countenance of that pious father or mother, or some dear friend. Their eyes were filled with tears, their chins have quivered, and their hearts have heaved a sigh, for they were too full for utterance in words, and you have asked yourselves the question, “Why is this ? Again we answer, Christ was then seeking you. Would that they had told you of his presence there. It would have been a great relief to them, and might have been a saving blessing to you. Loved ones, with whom you have drank the cup of sorrow and of joy, have been taken from you. Some of them, under circumstances which furnished the fullest pledge of their future, blissful destiny ; and others, under those which forced the conviction on your minds that a rayless night was before them ; but in either case, “the Son of man” has been seeking you. Behold that shepherd, hurriedly going forth after his sheep ! A terrible storm is approaching, and he is in earnest to gather them into the fold. There is a lamb which is playing on the soft green hillocks.

Its mother will not leave it, so the shepherd contrives to catch it, and bearing it tenderly in his arms, goes into the fold, where the mother follows, and both are safe. Thus, I have thought, "the Son of man," the great and "good Shepherd," often seeks to save parents by taking and placing their children in the glorious fold above. In some way, by some means, "the Son of man" seeks all the lost—many of them in ways already mentioned; all of them by the ever-helping, blessed Spirit—and as he seeks all with the desire to save all, let us consider,

II. How he saves them. On this point our remarks will chiefly refer to those who are lost through personal sin and guilt. Such are saved, if saved at all, in compliance with certain conditions. For if such be unconditionally saved, then are they already saved; and, if now saved, are saved in their sins, and not from them, and would be just as well off if not saved at all. If "the Son of man" saves men unconditionally, and they are not yet saved, then it follows that either he is not willing or is not able to save them. And if not both willing and able to save them now, he never will be, for "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." But this whole matter is put in a very clear light by "the Son of man" himself. He says in John i, 11-13, "He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he

power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of man, but of God." Mark! To those who received him and believed on his name he gave power to become sons of God, and they were born of God. This condition has never been revoked, and is, therefore, in full force to-day. Christ still comes to men, and still seeks them. If they will receive him and believe on his name, he will give them power to become the sons of God, and they shall be born of God. Thus the salvation of the Gospel amounts to something. It makes of the lost the sons of God. It will do this for you, and do it now. It did so in ancient times, and does so in this year of grace.

Will any of you who have been sought so long by "the Son of man" now consent to be saved by him? I never asked that question until I had been sought and saved by him; and should not ask it now if I did not feel that he was now seeking you through me. O he would save you, and make of you a son of God, an heir of heaven. Come, yield just now! Time flies, and on its wings you are rapidly nearing eternity. Ask the good on earth and God in heaven to help you. Do not delay; your peril is great, your danger imminent. Now "the Son of man" is seeking to save you. Embrace him, receive him, believe on his name, and you will have passed the dangerous

point. Refuse and spurn him, and you shall hear him say, "I have called, and ye have refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man hath regarded . . . I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh." "The love of Christ constraineth us," and we therefore continue our appeal. What, sinner, must be your reflections in a dying hour or a judgment day, if you do not consent to be saved by "the Son of man?" Will they not be these, or similar? "The Son of man" sought me—sought me on my way to the ball-room, to the gaming table, and to the groggeries; sought me even in the chambers of harlotry, and sought me sober, and sought me drunken; yea, sought me ever, but sought me alas! alas! in vain; and the consequence to me is, I am lost! forever lost!

Unless there is no God, no heaven or hell, and no immortality for man, you must soon or later be the subject of reflections which shall sting your soul like the lash of an exterminating angel. "The Son of God" did not become "the Son of man" to make earth a play-ground, or to give men license to sin, nor did he become obedient to death, even the death of the cross, to simply show us how much more the Father loved us; but he came to make a sacrifice for sin, and thereby to open the gates of life to those who for sin were in the highway to death and hell. He came "to seek and to save that which was lost,"

and the object for which he came, disregarded by man, must stamp his soul with immeasurable guilt, and provide food for the worm that shall never die. We close with the utterance of a glorious truth and a most important question: "The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." Will you seek to be saved by him? And if so, when? WHEN?

## RELIGIOUS PRINCIPLE GRADUALLY DEVELOPED.

"And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men."—1 THESS. iii, 12.

I. THE religious principle in man is gradually developed.

1. This agrees with the order of God in the creation of the material universe. The account of this, as given in Genesis, represents it as the result of a succession of creative acts. "In the beginning, God created the heaven and the earth;" that is, inanimate, senseless matter; then the varied forms of animal organization, with the throbbing heart and the beating pulse; and, finally, man, "erect and tall," with arching brow and intelligence, beaming eye and thrilling voice and capacious soul, endowed with reason, memory, thought, and will. What a mighty development of creative skill and power is here brought to our view? How vast the difference between the creation of the "dust of the earth" and the creation of a "man!"

2. The work of atonement furnishes us with another illustration of the proposition. When the fullness of time had come "The Lamb of God" made his appearance "in Bethlehem of Judea," but it was

not until, through a succession of sufferings bearing him on to death, that he could send forth the hope-inspiring declaration to the world, “It is finished.” The Captain of our salvation was made “perfect through sufferings.”

Now, as the religious principle in man is God-given, we have strong presumptive evidence that its development was designed to conform to his order in the work of creation and of the atonement. But the figures employed by inspiration to represent this inner life, or spiritual nature, are chiefly depended on to support the truth of the proposition.

The leaven hid in three measures of meal, operating and diffusing its own nature, “till the whole lump is leavened.” The “mustard-seed, among the smallest of seeds,” but deposited in the earth, and having the principle of life which the God of nature gave it, it begins to germinate and to struggle upward. Soon it breaks the surface of the earth, the sun kisses it a welcome to his light and heat, and development is its history, until it affords a place of shelter and of rest to “the fowls of heaven.” The grain, “first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.”

These all eloquently indicate development, gradual, but certain and important. Again, we are required to “add to our faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance,

patience, and to patience . . charity ; " also to " grow in grace ." Now, as all this requires time, we see that the religious principle in man must be gradually developed.

This is also confirmed in the conversion of individuals. First, a single truth is fastened in the sinner's mind. A beam from the " Sun of Righteousness " warms it into germination. Conviction is the first result ; then repentance and faith, yielding the peaceable fruits of righteousness, gradually follow. In some a shorter, in others a longer, space of time is necessary. As in some soils and climates seeds spring up and attain maturity more rapidly and in less time than they do in others, so is it with " the good seed of the kingdom " and its growth in human hearts. Old, mature, and fruit-bearing Christians are of essential service to the world. The want of them is seriously felt in almost all communities. But age and long walking with Christ is necessary to this. Hence the necessity of early conversions and of constant faithfulness.

II. The development of the religious principle in man is effected by divine agency. " The Lord make you," etc. If the seed of grace be sown by the divine hand its growth and development will be watched by the eye of divinity. But here, as in other departments of his work, God employs means ; for, as the frosts of winter are extracted from the

earth by the influence of the sun, the “balmy breath of spring,” and the resurrective appliances under God’s control, so he produces the development of the religious principle in man by instrumentalities of his own appointment.

God works in man to will for himself, and to do for others. The extent of the development indicated in the text could never be hoped for had not God to do with it. Increasing and abounding “in love one toward another,” as subjects of “like precious faith,” or as pilgrims on their way to the saint’s everlasting rest, are no very great developments of love, for it is natural for children of the same family to be kindly affectionate “one toward another;” but a development of love which embraces “all men” is above nature, and must be the result of a divine agency.

“Toward all men.” How unlike the devisements of men. With them the members of a party, the subscribers to a creed, either ecclesiastical or political, are to be cared for—yes, pure affection is to be cherished and cultivated among themselves, while all outside are turned over to the tender mercies of the devil.

Now God would rebuke this we-have-Abraham-to-our-fatherism ; this superfine and fashionable exclusivism, by teaching us to “increase and abound in love . toward all men.”

“Toward all men.” I love that utterance. Divinity must have inspired it. It bears the impress of God. He sends out his love to all men. “God so loved the world”—the red man, the black man, as well as the white man—“that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life;” and now he says to every man, “Love thy neighbor as thyself.” Thus Christianity is made the greatest social element in existence. Its subjects are not only “one in Christ,” but they are taught that a test of true discipleship is positive good-will toward the great brotherhood.

“Toward all men.” Here is the germ from which shall grow the trees whose leaves shall be “for the healing of the nations;” or the fountain whence shall roll a stream through the world whose influence shall yet carry life and verdure and moral beauty into its spiritual wastes, until their inhabitants shall rejoice in a higher life and the possession of a more firmly predicated hope of heaven. Glorious event! wonderfully grand consummation!

By the increasing developments of the present, the signs of the times, and the infallible word of prophecy, we are assured of its approach. The different tribes of God’s spiritual Israel are becoming better educated in regard to his benevolent purposes respecting the race. They are less dogmatic, and less

wedded to creeds, and at the same time more catholic in spirit and abundant in good works. These augur increasing light and increasing love, which are sure to be succeeded by a more thorough consecration of whatever is available as a means for the wider spread of truth and peace and righteousness.

Let but the element of this great success, as expressed in the words of the apostle, become the common possession of all who name

“The name to sinners given,”

and earth would soon begin to roll her halleluiahs round ; and the blended voices of the redeemed below and of the redeemed above would make music of richer, sweeter melody than fell on the ear of God “when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.”

“Love only can the conquest win,  
The strength of sin subdue.”

### GRACE SHOULD NOT BE RECEIVED IN VAIN.

"Receive not the grace of God in vain."—2 COR. vi, 1.

BUT what is grace? Some say, "It is unmerited favor." It is that, and more. It is favor expressed, and unmerited, of course, otherwise it would not be grace, for that which is or can be merited can never be dignified with the name of grace. Grace, or favor, like faith, depends upon expression for its life; for, as faith without works is dead, so grace without manifestation is not grace—is nothing. "He that seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion, how dwelleth the love of God in him?" Simply, absolutely, not at all. Grace, like faith and love, is active, operative. It is ever going forth on missions of benevolence. With noiseless footsteps it goes to the homes of wretchedness, from bounty-laden hands it pours into wounded hearts the elixir of life, and from lips touched with seraphic fire it warbles the song of redemption in the ears of the desponding ones.

Let us trace some of its more prominent manifestations. And first among them is "the word of his grace." How appropriate this language! Grace gave the word of the Lord to man. It reveals to

man the thoughts of a God of grace—his gracious purposes respecting man, and the abundant provisions which grace has made for him. The Bible also records the wonderful achievements of grace, showing us how darkness has retired at its approach; how hope has succeeded despair, the songs of joy the wailings of woe, and a higher spiritual life the death “in trespasses and sin.” Could all the achievements of grace, in its multiplied subjects, (to which, for the most part, the inspired writers do but simply allude,) be drawn out in detail, what a volume of captivating interest we should have. In the eleventh chapter of Hebrews we are furnished with a catalogue of distinguished names, which is closed by the declaration, “These all died in the faith.” But as to the specific achievements of grace in each of these, what mind can conceive? what imagination can grasp? Through the Revelator we are informed that of all the tribes of the children of Israel there were sealed “a hundred and forty and four thousand.” After this he adds: “I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands; and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.” Now grace conquered sin in all of

these, and blessed and saved them. O grace, thou art mighty!

In the gift of the Spirit we also recognize a prominent manifestation of grace. Noiseless as the blessed sunlight, it throws its gracious influence down upon us. Secretly, as are the agencies in nature, expelling the frosts of winter and enrobing the earth in beauty, does the Spirit's pervading presence subdue within us the enmity of carnal minds, thus preparing them for the reception of the "good seed of the kingdom." Gently, as the touch of an angel's wing, does it woo us in thought to God and heaven, when earthly cares and trials press upon us; for the Spirit's mission is most gracious, supplying the sin-darkened with light, the sin-ruined with hope, the weak with strength, and the dead with life. Let us bid him welcome to our hearts, for fellowship with him shall make us happy in this world, and in the life of the world to come.

But grace, embodied in "God manifest in the flesh," is the crowning expression of it, and one on which the thoughts of men may dwell with increasing interest for ever and ever; for, in fact, the word, in its fullness of instruction and promise—the Spirit, in its abundant light and consolation, in its awakening power and renewing energy—would never have been ours but for the sacrificial offering of "the Son of God." He, leading captivity captive, received

—purchased—these gifts for men. No marvel then, that, as Christians gather around the cross, and hang their hopes of Heaven on Jesus' mighty arm, and find their confidence in him honored, that they should sing,

“Here the whole Deity is known,  
Nor dares a creature guess  
Which of the glories brighter shone,  
The justice or the grace.”

Linked with these expressions of grace is every rational hope of pardon here and of holiness and happiness hereafter. Yet these, however interesting and important, are not of themselves sufficient. They are general, not specific. They are unconditional, and, with no more than these, we “are yet in our sins.” Without pardon we are guilty, without sanctification we are polluted. “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” The grace, then, of justification is only enjoyed on condition. The former manifestations of grace—the Bible, the Holy Spirit, and the Son of God—come to men unsought. The latter—the pardon of sin and heart purity—are ours only in complying with conditions, clearly expressed. The former are preparative, the latter are compleutive.

The light, the blessed light of the sun, is abundant and free ; but we can only enjoy the scenes of loveliness and beauty lying within reach of our vision by opening our eyes and looking in the right direction. Music, vieing in sweetness and power with that which is poured from seraphs' hearts, comes from the well-drilled band on the deck of the beautiful steamer ; but if we would drink it in we must get within hearing distance, and be sure that our ears are unstopped. By opening our eyes and ears we do not purchase or merit the enjoyment flowing from these sources of pleasure—the doing of these things is the condition of enjoyment. By eating, the starving man pays not for the food which the hand of charity has brought him. Yet his eating is the condition on which his life is prolonged.

Thus God proposes to save men from guilt and pollution. A plenitude of provision has been made, but a believing and humble acceptance of it is indispensable.

## THE MIND OF CHRIST.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus."—  
PHIL. ii, 5.

MIND and not matter is principally affected by religion. The state of the heart and not of the head is the great condition of salvation. Hence it is only by the renewing of the mind that men can prove "what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God."

I. Our text intimates that men do not naturally have the mind that was in Christ ; it also teaches them that they may have that mind. In support of the fact intimated, we have but to contrast some of the leading traits in the mind of Christ with those naturally found in the minds of men. And,

1. Humility was a characteristic of the mind of Christ. Although he had "glory with the Father before the world was," and received the worship of "all the angels of God," yet he "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men : and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." That is, he laid aside the robes of regal maj-

esty and took upon himself the drapery of an earthly tabernacle—the crown of universal sovereignty, and accepted one of thorns—the worship of adoring ones in the empyrean of bliss, to receive instead the hate and the abuse of wicked men and devils united. In a word, he consented to transfer himself from an abode of purity to one of moral and social corruption, and from a throne of life to a cross of death. And, let it be remembered, that none of these things were done in obedience to any extraneous or outward force, but to the impulse of his own divine nature, and you have an exhibition of humility which must command your respect, even if it fails to win your love.

2. Benevolence is another leading trait in “the mind that was in Christ.” Ay, it was this which gave birth to his humility. It was his benevolence that brought him from the heavens and cradled him in a manger. “For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, that ye through his poverty might be rich.” During the period of his public ministry “he went about doing good,” by leaving his blessings on the bodies and souls of the people. The dumb were helped to speak and sing, the deaf to hear, the blind to see, and the lame to leap like a hart; the sorrowful were made to rejoice, the afflicted were comforted, the guilty were forgiven, the

polluted cleansed, the despairing to be joyful in hope, and the dying to conquer even in the hour of death.

3. Forgiveness was also a trait in the mind that was in Christ. Of all the beings who have walked this earth Christ was the purest and the best; yet of all these he was the subject of the greatest abuse. He was spit on, mocked, taunted, jeered at, derided, insulted, and finally put to death. Still,

“From the cross uplifted high,  
Where the Saviour deigns to die,”

there rolls up to the eternal throne the petition, “Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.” This element in the character of Christ, this trait of his mind, even modern infidelity forbears to assail. It may be for the reason that there is a presentiment in the minds of its disciples that they may possibly need its exercise in their own behalf. Should it be so with any now, let me assure them from my own experience that this will surely be the case, and that they may save themselves from a vast amount of poignant sorrow by testing Christ’s forgiving spirit now. Dark, indeed, and long was the night of infidelity that was upon my soul, and terrible beyond description were the thoughts which thronged my mind when I heard and understood the thunders of the law. The first great truth which then, with un-

cheering ray, entered my soul and kept it from despair was this : “ There is forgiveness with God.” Weeks of conflict followed, known to none but God and myself, ere I found the sentence of pardon in my heart ; but when it came, as come it did, the struggle ceased, my troubled soul was all at rest, and Jesus was the sweetest name my lips could utter. Blessed be God ! it is so yet ; for now, as then, I am allowed to associate with it the glorious truth that he is still a forgiving Jesus.

“ Five bleeding wounds he bears,  
Received on Calvary ;  
They pour effectual prayers,  
They strongly plead for me :  
'Forgive him, O forgive ! ' they cry,  
Nor let that ransomed sinner die.' ”

4. Religious devotion was another trait in the mind that was in Christ Jesus. Even at the age of twelve years, when chided by his reputed parents for the trouble he had caused them by remaining “ in the temple, disputing with the lawyers and doctors,” he replied, “ Wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business ? ” His work was to do the will of his Father, and to finish the work given him. No toil, no suffering, and no sacrifice was considered too great in the prosecution of his mission unto the bodies and the souls of men. He came into the world to do good, he lived to that end, and died to consum-

mate it. Difficulties lay in his way, but his religious devotion conquered them ; formidable oppositions thronged him at every step, but he scattered them by the zeal of his majestic spirit, passing and pressing on toward the disenthralment of the race. And now the final crisis approaches, and the legions of hell are let loose against him. Will he not now falter ? Listen to what he says : "Now is my soul troubled ; and what shall I say ? Father, save me from this hour : but for this cause came I unto this hour." It was thus that he met the crisis. No wonder that he came from it shouting, "It is finished !"

Now that we are done noticing these traits in the mind that was in Christ Jesus, we ask if you have ever discovered them naturally existing in the minds of men ? Have you thus found them in your own minds ? Rather, have you not detected in your own and in other minds exactly the opposite of these traits ? Are you not naturally proud, instead of being humble ? more selfish than benevolent ? more inclined to seek revenge than to be forgiving ? and more, far more, to throw off religious obligation than to be controlled by an unswerving Christian principle ? Come look at your real moral features. They ought to very much resemble Christ's. His was a symmetrical character, and, because of this, was lovely. You respect it, and if

yours was like it, it would be respected also. Now, do not evade these inquiries; they are made in kindness, and you will and must meet them. O dare to meet them now, and honestly give your thoughts to them, and, if need be, ask God to help you to hold them in your minds, for they are seeds of truth from which may grow eternal joys, even the fruits of “the mind that was in Christ.”

Let us now,

## II. Consider what the text teaches.

It is, I know, a great thing for men who are naturally destitute of the mind that was in Christ Jesus to persuade themselves, or to be persuaded by others, to really think or believe such a possession to be possible; yet we believe such a thing possible, and we predicate this belief on the following considerations:

1. The nature of conversion. This always involves the idea of a change. There can be no conversion without a change, and whenever souls are the subjects of conversion they are always changed from bad to good. The change is so radical that the individual is declared to have passed “from death unto life,” and to have become “a new creature.” And this is, indeed, true, in the character of his thoughts, the objects of his ambitions, the subjects of his solicitudes, and in the source of his joys. It is true, as to the friendships he seeks, the choice of

his associates, and in the shaping of his destiny. In his measure he is humble, as Christ was humble ; benevolent, as he was benevolent ; forgiving, as he was forgiving ; and strongly bound to religious principle, as was he. Again,

2. We predicate our belief that man may have the mind that was in Christ on the divinity of the power by which the change wrought in conversion is accomplished. It is not by the will of man, but by the power of God. It is not by outward ordinances, but by the operations of the Holy Ghost. It is “not by might, nor by power”—that is, human—“but by my Spirit, saith the Lord ;” and yet this divine energy of power is not exercised arbitrarily. A persuasive force goes before it, begetting a desire, or a “hungering and thirsting” for that change—that new creation, until the soul becomes vehement and imperative in its demands for the higher life and the holy joys produced by Christ within it, “the hope of glory.” It is the work of the Divine One. And he is able to accomplish it, as able as he ever can be ; but he will not do it without the consent of man. As some soils are naturally sterile, and will not, in their natural state, grow plentiful harvests, but must first be cultivated and enriched, so it is with human hearts. They are naturally unproductive of good ; but God works in us “both to will and to do of his good pleasure,” and commands us to “work out”

our "own salvation with fear and trembling." O let us not resist the plow of truth, the rain of grace, nor the seed of life! and God shall make of our hearts a garden, in which shall grow the fruits of righteousness, and all the traits of the mind "which was also in Christ Jesus." But we further argue the possibility of this,

3. From the necessities of the case. Men must be good if they would be happy. "To be good is to be happy." The one is the cause, the other the sequence. You cannot separate them. And yet how many act as if these things were not so, and are dreaming of going to heaven, and of being happy there, simply because they are there, and not because there is an affinity between their moral natures and that holy place. Now, the Bible represents God as being the attraction, force, and center of heaven. "In thy presence is fullness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." But must not men become allied to God before they can be joyful in his presence, or experience pleasure at his right hand? Do not the laws of mind and of happiness demand this? Were it a thing possible for a holy angel, and as such, to seek enjoyment in dancing a cotillion, or imbibing distilled damnation? Is there any affinity between St. Paul and a modern rumseller? Are there any points of resemblance between a licentious man or woman and the spirits of just men made per-

fect? What is it but the absence of oneness of mind that is the cause of the frequent cases of divorce? And why is it that so many men do not and will not bear to hear the truth? Why, but for the simple reason that they have not learned to love the truth. Would they but make her acquaintance, they would no sooner flatter themselves with the idea of getting to heaven, and of being happy simply by getting there, than would the beggar conclude that he had become rich by his being allowed to sit down in the princely palace. We must become like God before we can enjoy his presence. Hence the command, "Be ye holy for I the Lord your God am holy." This is the great, the universal, condition of happiness. If, then, God desires or wills our happiness, (and I think there is no truth more clearly taught in the Bible,) he must have made it possible for us to obtain the mind that was in Christ Jesus; or, in other words, to obtain Gospel holiness. You feel this to be truth, but are disposed, it may be, to act upon the thought, this condition of happiness will be performed by death, or it will be wrought by a process of suffering to which the soul will be subjected in the endless future. With the Bible in your hand, do you, can you, thus ignore "the blood of the everlasting covenant," and set aside the efficacy of "the washing of regeneration," and "the renewing of the Holy Ghost?" Will you, dare you, thus

treat Christ crucified? I beseech and entreat you all to rigidly scrutinize the opinions you entertain respecting this vital point, and at any sacrifice of these to reject those which do not, have not, and will never lead you to seek the mind that was in Christ. I feel that this is the *desideratum*. That it is the great and pressing want of both the Church and the world. Opinions, theories, and creeds are worth nothing to you or me only as they influence us to become more and more as was Christ Jesus. Opinions in the head weigh nothing against divine principles in the heart. Only these can hold the soul to her heavenly moorings amid the fearful and terrible upheavings of the sinful elements which are cursing the race. These shall yet accomplish a glorious mission. Shall they not have a practical illustration in our hearts and lives? May God help us thus to decide!

The Church is weak for the want of the mind that was in Christ; the world is unhappy because of this want. Neither can be saved without it. Both may be saved with it. This is the crowning excellency, this the real glory of the Church. In the larger possession, the fuller development of this mind is, in an important sense, suspended the weal or the woe of the untold and unnumbered millions of the fruitful future.

Men and women of God, seek this high endow-

ment. And remember that your personal happiness here and in heaven demands and depends upon its possession. O let the mind that was in Christ be in you, not only for your own sake, but for the sake of others.

“Join all the glorious names  
Of wisdom, love, and power,  
That ever mortals knew,  
Or angels ever bore;  
All are too mean to speak his worth,  
Too mean to set the Saviour forth.

“Great Prophet of our God,  
Our tongues shall bless thy name;  
By thee the joyful news  
Of our salvation came;  
The joyful news of sins forgiven,  
Of hell subdued, and peace with heaven.

“O thou almighty Lord,  
Our Conqueror and King,  
Thy scepter and thy sword,  
Thy reigning grace, we sing:  
Thine is the power; behold we sit  
In willing bonds beneath thy feet.”

## SPIRITUAL GRAFTING.

"Receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save your souls."—JAMES i, 21.

A MONG Mr. Wesley's contemporaries there were those who contended that the children of holy parents were necessarily holy also, and, therefore, did not need regeneration. To this Mr. Wesley, in substance, replied: "The seed of the fruit of the crab-tree, if planted, will produce crab-trees; but if the crab-tree be cut off and grafted with ever so excellent a variety of apple, the seed from which, if planted, will produce the crab-tree, the grafting only changing the fruit and not the seed." Hence the utility of grafting, hence the necessity of spiritual regeneration, or scriptural conversion.

A moment now with a definition of the terms, meekness and ingrafted. "Meekness," says Buckminster, "is a grace which Jesus alone inculcated, and which no ancient philosopher seems to have understood or recommended."

Webster says, "It is submission to the divine will, without murmuring or peevishness." "Ingraft," says Mr. Webster, "to insert, as a cion of one tree or plant into another for propagation; to propagate

by incision ;” “to plant or introduce something foreign into that which is native for the purpose of propagation.”

Thus Dryden says, “This fellow would ingraft a foreign name upon our stock.”

It also means “to set or fix deep and firm.”

Thus Shakespeare says, “Ingrafted love he bears to Cæsar.”

If you succeed in keeping these definitions in your memories you will be the more likely to profit by the circumstance which I am about to relate, and the various lessons suggested by it, all of which, I trust, will be illustrative of our subject.

In the spring of 1861 or '62, while making a number of pastoral visits one day, I came where a man and a little boy was at work on a beautiful piece of ground. The stumps and roots and stones had all been removed, and it had been very deeply but firmly plowed, so that it had the appearance of a nicely fitted large garden. Entering into conversation with the man, I soon learned that he designed it for an apple-tree nursery. I also learned in a few minutes a number of interesting facts relative to that business which, during the years that have since been passing, have suggested thoughts and lessons which will now be presented in this discourse, and which, it is hoped, may both interest and profit those to whom they are addressed.

In the February and March preceding the man referred to had grafted three thousand little roots or stocks, which they had grown from apple seeds the previous year. The seeds had been gathered at the cider-mill, and, as the poorest varieties of apples are used in cider-making, the seeds were not likely to produce trees that would bear the best varieties of apples. Hence the necessity of grafting. The cions, or grafts, had been gotten with great care from healthy trees, and of choice varieties, in the bearing orchards of that section of country; and now that they had been nicely set in the little stocks, they were brought forth out of the cellar, where they had been kept, and were being transplanted into the warm, mellow soil prepared for them. I think they were placed one foot apart, in very straight drills; and that these drills, or little furrows, were about three feet from each other, so that a horse and a small plow or cultivator could pass between them. Thirty of these drills, one hundred feet in length, with trees in each a foot apart, would just contain the three thousand grafted stocks, and would only require thirty-four square rods. These little stocks, all living and doing well for three years, would become trees an inch in diameter, and from five to six feet in height. At this time in their history they are generally sold and taken into different parts of the country and set out into orchards.

Thus, these trees, at even twenty cents per tree, would bring the sum of \$600 ; and this, doubtless, is a larger profit than such a piece of ground would yield from any other production. It was, therefore, both natural and easy for me to think that, as all these little stocks needed grafting, so all children, having sprang from that man,

“ Whose guilty fall  
Corrupts his race, and taints us all,”

need a new nature grafted into them if they would ever become “trees of righteousness of the Lord’s planting.”

Another very natural and easy thought was, that it were much better for these little stocks to be grafted while small and tender than to wait until they were old and hard, for, if grafted young and in the root, the trees can easily be made to grow straight and smooth and beautiful ; and this suggested the thought that it is very important that all little children should be early brought to Christ, and put into spiritual nurseries, that they may grow up “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

Among my first recollections are three fall-pippin trees in my father’s orchard. Away back, far beyond my ability to comprehend the process of grafting, the original stocks of these had been cut off, more than a foot from the roots, and grafts inserted.

At that point, in each, a very ugly bulge appeared. The grafts had largely outgrown the original stocks, and, from long and abundant bearing, the trees were leaning badly, causing them to compare unfavorably with their neighbors, which had straight and graceful forms.

Thus, I have thought, it is with those who are not converted until they have sinned long, and by often resisting the Holy Spirit, and those who in early life “receive with meekness the ingrafted word, which is able to save” their “souls.” Though both bear the same kind of fruit, it is in different degrees of fullness and perfection.

As in nature all pine-trees are one, though differing very much in perfection and value, so in grace all Christians are one, though differing considerably in thought, and in the development of the spiritual life and principle. I need not say God cannot make such Christians of old sinners as he can of the young, but I need to say, and will say, that he does not. An old sinner, becoming a Christian, is happy, and has personal union and communion with Christ, and, if he abide in him, will “become meet for the inheritance of the saints in light;” but the child, receiving Jesus, and abiding in him, becomes “rooted and built up in him,” and shall so grow up into him in all things that he shall “adorn the doctrine of God, his Saviour,” by blessing the world with the

influence of nearly a whole life consecrated to his Redeemer.

Another natural and easy thought was—these three thousand little stocks of trees are not put into this well-prepared piece of ground that they may abide there, but, rather, that they may be helped to grow and develop, and afterward be taken up and set out into well-arranged orchards, where each tree will be expected to bear fruit after its kind for the use and the profit of the owner; and right here was born another thought. It was this: The family and the Sunday-school should give culture and growth to the child-Christian, so that he may be prepared to assume individual responsibility by taking the place of some old honored tree in God's orchard, whose life has been “exhaled to heaven;” or, in association with others of the great family, or Sunday-school nursery, be used to plant a Christian community, or state, in some hitherto unoccupied region, or “where heathen idol-gods adore.”

Another thought was: These little stocks have not only all been grafted, and with a good variety, but with good varieties; and this I think but illustrative of the different fruits growing on the Christian tree.

In his Epistle to the Galatians St. Paul mentions, as “the fruit of the Spirit,” nine varieties, love being the first and chief. “The fruit of the Spirit is love,

joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

A whole orchard bearing but one kind of apple might not be worthless simply on that account, for if there were other orchards contiguous, bearing other varieties, exchanges could be made; but the more convenient and economical way is almost universally adopted; that is, of having different varieties in the same inclosure.

Thus with the individual Christian and the local Church in any community. Either might not be wholly useless in possession of only "love," or "joy," or "peace," but either would be quite as happy, and far more useful, did they, in addition, exhibit "long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance."

Some orchards are not grafted until they come into bearing, and the fruit not being such as is desired, part of the branches are "cut off," and new and better varieties are introduced. This, however, renders apple gathering difficult and unpleasant, as, falling together, they have to be separated for specific use—the fair from the knurly, the good from the worthless. Thus, I have thought, it frequently is with individuals and Churches. There is such a mixing and commingling of the obedient and the disobedient, of the broad and the narrow, the generous and the penurious, the precious and the vile, as to suggest the

thought and enforce the conviction that the spiritual grafting had been very imperfectly done, and that “roots of bitterness” still remained, into which the ingrafted word had not been received with sufficient “meekness” to save the soul.

In the grafting of trees the stocks and the grafts are as “clay in the hands of the potter.” That is, they are not used with any intelligent resisting or receptive force on the part of either. The stock has no power to say, I will not receive that graft; nor has the graft any ability to ask that it may be inserted into the root or stock; but the spiritual grafting is done on other and higher principles. In its accomplishment the will of God and the will of man always co-operate. The phraseology of the text teaches, “the ingrafted word” is received. The will has given its consent to the reception. The ingrafted word is received “with meekness” on the part of the free and intelligent recipient. Having become convinced that his nature should be changed and renewed by an intimate, invisible, yet real and living connection and communion with a higher and perfectly holy nature, the rational soul has decided to submit to the process, be it never so painful.

The cutting away of the growths of sin by “the sword of the Spirit” has been painful in the extreme; but the introduction of the Christ-spirit and the Christ-life with the Christ-peace and the Christ-

joy have far more than compensated for the cost, the struggle, and the suffering ; for the soul now has her “fruit unto holiness,” “and the end,” in prospect, “everlasting life.” Now there is love where was hatred, “joy” where was sorrow, and “peace” where was strife ; “long-suffering” where were impatience and fretfulness, “gentleness” where were rudeness and harshness, “goodness” where was vileness, “faith” where were doubt and unbelief, “meekness” where were self-will and arrogance, and “temperance” where were passion, indulgence of lust, evil appetites, and propensities.

Thus is seen the difference between having the Christ-spirit and the Satan-spirit in us. One makes our lives here peaceful and happy and useful, and at its close opens to our souls the gates of pearl and streets of gold in an eternal heaven ; and the other makes our lives here miserable and wretched, and a curse to others, and, when it closes, opens up to our souls an entrance into outer darkness in an endless, comfortless hell.

Workers in the Sunday-school, I trust you will not deal with the children and youth in such an important sense committed to your care as if they were little trees, which you think are so straight and promising and perfect that they had better be left to grow as they are, until it can more fully be seen what kind of fruit they will bear, but, the rather, labor to insert

a Gospel bud into their moral natures, whose growth and fruit shall prove you to be workmen which needeth not to be ashamed, and whose work shall abide the tests of time and the decisions of the last judgment, yielding you “fruit that shall abound to your account,”

“While life, and thought, and being last,  
Or immortality endures.”

## GOD'S WORD A MIRROR.

"For if any be a hearer of the word, and not a doer, he is like unto a man beholding his natural face in a glass: for he beholdeth himself, and goeth his way, and straightway forgetteth what manner of man he was. But whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a doer of the work, this man shall be blessed in his deed."—JAMES i, 23–25.

"**B**UT," says the objector, "looking-glasses were not made until long after this epistle was written." Be it so, yet highly polished stones served the same purpose, and were called mirrors, the name we now give to looking-glasses. The word of God is a mirror, and men may look into it by feeling, hearing, and seeing.

Let us consider some of its qualities. An ordinary mirror,

1. Reflects the object before it, be it man or beast or bird; the insect on sportive wing, the buzzing fly, or crawling reptile; the tender herb, the blushing flower, or lofty towering pine; the bubbling spring, the rippling rill, or the brimming river; the quiet vale, the story-telling glen, or the awe-inspiring mountain.

Thus it is with the word of God. Do men bring to it proud hearts? Their pride is made manifest.

Do they bring to it unbelieving minds ? They are reproved for them ; or, affections set on created good, they are faithfully advised as to the consequences. Are the opposites of all these brought before it ? Their possessors are made to see their value, and are given to know themselves as being heirs of God, and as being on their way to join in the triumphal march of the mighty hosts on the plains of immortality.

2. Ordinary mirrors are prized in proportion to the perfection with which they reflect the image of the things before them. True, a few ugly-featured people may prize a false mirror to a truth-telling one, but the large majority of mankind really think more of those which are exactly true to nature. The reflections of the objects before the word of God are rigidly correct. Its testimony in regard to the nature of sin, its guilt and offensiveness in the sight of God, the danger to which it exposes all who cherish and practice it, is " faithful and true." Still, because of this quality in the word of God, some men are very cautious how they get before it, and thus do they corroborate the testimony of this spiritual mirror, in that they will not come to the light, lest their deeds be made manifest. We know that a man may persuade himself to think that he has a clean face when he has not ; but is he justifiable in not looking into a mirror for fear of being driven to the wash-

bowl? Thus sinners, by the help of the devil, may flatter themselves that they are very pure and good in heart, but this can never justify them in neglecting the Bible for fear it will urge them with a mighty force to hasten to Calvary. A man's face is not made unclean by looking into a mirror. His looking into one only reveals that fact, and makes him conscious of it. So with looking into the Gospel glass. It makes no man's heart sinful or guilty. If it be thus, disobedience to God but helps him to a knowledge of that fact. What must be thought of an ugly or unclean faced man or woman who should demolish their looking-glass because, when they appeared before it, it failed to reflect a specimen of perfect beauty and cleanliness? Would you not account them insane or idiotic? What, then, should be the judgment of all right-minded men against those who labor to tear down and destroy the great spiritual mirror God has hung up in the Christian temples and homes of our land because it reflects so truly the moral corruptions and impurities of their sinful and sinning hearts?

It is possible that there are some persons who are now addressed that have, for some reason or other, learned to dislike the Bible. Allow me, in all kindness, and with a sincere desire for your highest good, to inquire why this dislike? Is not the Bible true? Then, surely, it has done you no injustice. Would

it not as faithfully reflect a good heart as a bad one? It surely would.

How very self-complacent you have felt, after cleansing your persons and clothing them from a well-furnished wardrobe, as you obtained a view of yourselves at the glass.

Please, go to-day; nay, this hour, to “the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness,” wash you “in the blood of the Lamb,” and the heavenly Bridegroom will adorn you with the garment of salvation; then appear before God’s perfect mirror, and you will thank him that it is so true to nature. Not that you will be more pleased with self than before, but with what Christ has made you; for, while an ordinary mirror reflects external objects, God’s mirror reflects internal features and principles. It also reflects the nature of God, his attributes and perfections, his justice, goodness, and love, his mercy and his grace. It also reflects the remedy for sin, Jesus—the Lamb of God, the beloved of the Father, his only Son. In it we behold him leaving the throne, the throne of glory. Yet he exchanges it for the manger, for suffering in the garden, for crucifixion on the cross, and for the gloom and the darkness of the grave. Yes, we behold him dying for us, dying that the race might not die eternally. The Jews crucify the Son of God; but John holds up the spiritual mirror before the cross, and there is reflected in capitals of

living light “the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.”

We look into that mirror again, and a moving scene is reflected. Jesus is ascending. A cloud receives and hides him from the enrapturing gaze of loving and adoring ones. And has he gone? Gone and hidden himself from men forever? Let us look into God's mirror again. I see a glorious image reflected, and its form is that of the “Son of man.” He is seated upon a throne, which is labeled Mediatorial. Around it are clustering and blending the glories of the infinite Godhead. Beneath the throne and proceeding from it flows the river of the water of life earthward—that is, menward; and even you and me ward. Yes, blessed be God! it has reached us, and we, therefore, believe it will yet reach the millions, for it is Jesus who gives direction to this stream of life, and all who feel its saving virtue are ready to join in glad acclaim,

“Flow, wondrous stream, with glory crowned,  
Flow on to earth's remotest bound;  
And bear us, on thy gentle wave,  
To him who all thy virtues gave.”

3. Once more. An ordinary mirror only reflects the image of objects before it by the light falling upon it. None have ever been made that would serve the purpose intended in the absence of light. This is verily true in regard to the spiritual mirror.

The light of the Holy Spirit is indispensable, for without it there is no reflection. True, there are those who ignore the idea or fact of his agency in the work of human enlightenment and salvation ; but, judging of the theories which they professedly get from the word of God without it, we are constrained to think its light would have helped them amazingly. Surely, it never helped them to the idea that Christ was only a man, or, at most, a super-angelic being ; that men are only partially depraved ; that regeneration is chiefly affected by immersion ; and that all of the Holy Spirit which it is possible for men to possess is in the written word.

Now, as it is utterly impossible for any one to get a perfect or even good image of himself in the dark, though standing before the most perfect looking-glass ; so it is absolutely vain for men to try to get a faithful impression of the great principles of Christianity from the Bible without the Holy Spirit's helping their infirmities by taking of the things of God and showing them unto them. And as a man, with any regard as to his appearance in public, would not be satisfied with barely light enough falling on his mirror to reveal a mere outline of his form and features, so those who have any concern for their souls will not be content with only an imperfect view of them, obtained by an occasional glance at the state of their hearts reflected from the word of the Lord.

Wisdom dictates a continuous looking into this spiritual mirror, and also suggests the importance of his asking for all the light that it is possible for him to endure ; for every imperfection of his moral nature brought to view by the strongest light but helps him to apprehend the infinite adaptation there is in Jesus' blood, and also the deep significance of those warnings which urge him to seek an application of its cleansing power.

"A light ! a light ! furnish me with a perfect light !" says the fair one, as she goes to her toilet before appearing with the rich and the gay at the evening party in the princely palace. And shall the soul, professedly on its way to mingle with the *élite* of the skies in the grand and glorious reception-room of the "King of kings," think of suitably adjusting her robes where the light of the Holy Spirit falls not ? Foolish thought, and vain as foolish. Were you going to appear in the court of France, of England, or of Russia, you would, doubtless, have more or less solicitude as to your bearing there, as also in regard to your dress and its adjustment. How, then, are we to explain your indifference and unconcern as to what shall be the character of your mien and the garments in which you shall appear before the court of heaven, the King eternal ? How, but by accounting you a hearer of the word, and not a doer ?

A hearer of the word ! What a privilege ? Go to

him who, for crime, has been banished to a dreary, desolate island, or to him who is incarcerated in a dungeon, or to him whose eyes are already swimming in the waters of death, and, by authority, tell him that he is restored to home, society, and life, and you will find but an imperfect illustration of the privilege which the hearer of God's word inherits. Think you the criminal would refuse to be led from his dreary abode, or the dying refuse to arise? Would they simply reply, "Your proclamation is all well enough; but, then, I guess I'll not avail myself of liberty or of life just now?" Far otherwise. Unconverted brothers and sisters, captives of Satan and slaves of sin, the Gospel ship heaves to and drops anchor at this time near the door of thy prison-house. The Commander, Jesus, throws his sweet voice down upon you, telling you that he is there — there to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of prisons to them that are bound. What a privilege! And will you not thus regard it? May the Holy Spirit give you a mind to do so! for to hear is not only a privilege, it is also a fearfully responsible thing. Behold that man seated on the engine. He is the engineer of the train; yet, notwithstanding, he is busily reading a "dime novel" or a lying political newspaper; the alarm bell rings, but he heeds it not, and the train dashes on, and, with its freight of human beings, becomes a wreck in the fearful chasm.

Was not his a responsible position? Before you, sinner, is the bottomless pit, the fearful depths of an endless damnation, toward which, with the flight of time, you are tending; others, influenced by you, are liable to go in the same direction. God has placed along your route many, O how many, signals of danger! Can any who are or who may be influenced by you account you innocent if you do not apprise them of it? "A hearer," but only a hearer; not a communicator, not a doer—a receiver, but not a diffuser.

Some people seem to be allied to an ordinary sponge. They have a great faculty to take in, but it requires a mighty pressure to get any thing out of them. Not, as it seems, because they so very highly prize that which they receive, but for the reason that they have cultivated the faculty of retention instead of the faculty of extension. Still, by divine authority, we say, "Let him that heareth say, Come."

In what a brief period would the voice of God, now the voice of mercy, reach those of the race farthest from the throne if all who hear would also do. Within the easy remembrance of nearly all of us embattled hosts, arrayed in conflict, were struggling for the mastery. The South for King Cotton, with slavery for his throne; the North for free labor, free homes, a free pulpit, and a free press. At length a victory, decisive and final, was given to the North, the glad tidings was borne on lightning's tire-

less wing to the seat of government, and in less than a month the lover of freedom, living in the most remote nook of civilization, experienced a thrill of wondrous joy. The hosts of heaven and hell are contending for the mastery. Every victory gained over Satan and his hosts should be promptly communicated. A devout thanksgiving should attest it. This would inspire Christians with greater courage, and carry dismay into the ranks of the enemy.

“Doers of the word” are blessed in the deed. How the tide of life rolls through their souls! How it refreshes them! How it cheers and gladdens others!

To hear and to do constitutes the approved and useful character. He it is who does not forget what manner of man he was.

Brethren, let us emulate him, and the mighty activities of Christ, through the wonderful energies of the Holy Ghost, shall constantly incite us to do as well as to hear, and the coming generations shall account us blessed, our dying day shall be our happiest, and the decisions of the final judgment shall assign us a place among the “workers together with God,” amid the splendors of the throne of glory.

With two remarks we close.

1. How great the number, comparatively, of those who only hear. In our largest congregations of hearers there is always room, and to spare, for the doers.

2. Sinner, how often has the Gospel glass been so held up before you that you could clearly see yourself? But a lack of moral courage has hitherto kept you from looking into it long enough to constrain you to fly to the peace and life-giving blood of the man of Calvary.

May God help you to see the importance of this, and aid you in so looking, as that you shall find life in Christ and life in heaven forever! Amen.

## THE COMING REVELATION.

A FUNERAL DISCOURSE.

"What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter."  
—JOHN xiii, 7.

WE are surrounded by inexplicable mysteries. Some of these spring from the earth, others are reflected from the sky, while others, involved in deeper mystery, spring from the mind and hand of God.

In some instances the simple act is seen and known and measured; but why it was performed, or even permitted, we cannot tell. We ask for the motive, and search, but search in vain, for the grand design—the end proposed to be accomplished.

1. There are mysteries of relationship and obligation.

What mysterious beings parents are to their children; and, in view of this, how difficult it is for parents to exercise a wise and healthful discipline over them. They do not understand why they should obey, nor apprehend the great good which is sure to come to them by a prompt and cheerful obedience.

With what propriety might every right-minded

father say to his offspring, “‘What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know’ by and by. Confide in me. The counsel that I give, the restraints which I impose, the discipline I am giving you, and the protection I am seeking to throw around your beginning life and molding character are all intended for your good. You may not, possibly cannot, see this to be so now, but you will see it ‘hereafter;’ and then you will love me all the more for this, for in all these my doings you will then see my fatherly heart yearning to guide your unwary feet away from thorns, your young affections away from objects that were either dead or dying, and your aspirations and hopes far, far away from creations only made to disappoint and sting you.”

Dear friends, thus it is with us. We see what God does, and what he permits to be done, and we say, “Lord, we know not what thou doest;” and we are filled with wonder and stand amazed, while He, caring for us infinitely more than an earthly father ever did or could, proceeds to do for us as “seemeth good to him.” Again,

## 2. There are mysteries of providence.

Sometimes the mother, at once the guardian and ministering angel of the household, is removed, and a darkness deeper than the grave settles down on the bereaved family. Sometimes the father, in the vigor of manhood, the strength of his years, is taken, and the

widow pours out her complaint in the language of one in olden time : “ ‘ Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends ; for the hand of God hath touched me ’ — the staff of my support is broken, and the light of my home has gone out in darkness.” Sometimes the youngest child is stricken down, the one that was thought of most, if not loved the best. Such a one is taken, and the sweet lips from which fell so much innocent prattle have ceased to move, and are closed by the touch of death.

In sobs and sighs and tears the question has gone forth, Why was this permitted ? Unto other parents it has come, but they could not answer it ; unto other brothers and sisters it has come, but they are silent, and cannot tell. Yet there is One who knows, and who will hold the secret until its revelation shall more perfectly serve his merciful purposes respecting us, and, in view of which, we can right well afford to patiently wait.

More than twenty-five years ago, as I neared my home from a distant appointment, I met my eldest daughter, with tearful face, who said, “ Ma thinks Willie is dying.” In three minutes I saw our boy, our only son. I looked on him, and made inquiries for a moment ; then hastened for Dr. Mills. It was but a little while ere I had him at our home. He entered a moment before me, and, as I was going in, turned and said to me, “ Your boy must die ; in truth,

is dying." I took our Willie in my arms; 'twas but a moment; the pulse had ceased, the heart was at rest. O how we did wish to know why it was thus! But we did not, and do not yet; still, as certain as we did not, and do not, so certain is it that we yet shall; and this to us is a most comforting thought, that, with the flight of time, we are hastening toward that deeply interesting revelation.

I lost my mother in childhood, a sister and a father in later years, but never knew how deep the iron of affliction could pierce the soul until it came in the death of children.

Where I have found soothing and comforting thought, I trust you may also. And,

1. It is well with your child.

Having passed away in the innocence of her being, she shall be folded in the arms of the "Good Shepherd," from whom she shall never stray into the paths of sin, as you and I have done. "From henceforth" her associations are to be among the lovely and the pure. Her walks will be the streets of gold, and her playmates those of purest thought, of kindest word, of love-beaming eyes, and of the sweetest voice and song, even "the minstrelsy of bliss." Remember, also,

2. She has been taken away from the evil to come.

Had her stay on earth been as long as yours has,

already the anguish of parting with father and mother and other dear friends must have been hers ; but from this, all this, she is now delivered.

While in this world parents and children cannot always be together, hence, had your child lived much longer here, you would have occasionally left her, it may be, hours and days together. On such occasions I do not know with what anxiety she would have waited your return ; nor do I know how great would have been her joy when that event occurred ; nor do I know how pleased and thankful you would forever be to find her at home and well. Allow me to say, that lovely child of yours is now at home. I cannot tell you how much she is delighted with it, nor with how many of the inmates she has become acquainted ; nor can I tell you with what solicitude she will await your arrival there. It is not for us just now to know ; but sure I am that she will be there to meet and greet you as you come. I trust you will believe and live so here that you will meet her there. If so, then "you shall know" what Jesus did when your child was taken from you, and why he took her to himself. There she shall never know for herself such sorrow as is now your own.

Think of her as forever safe from pain of body and from stain of soul. Think—and may God bless the thought to your present and future comfort!—that every pain you feel, and every tear you shed, and

every sigh your bosoms heave, were almost certain to have entered into the experience of that dear child had she lived here as long as you are living. From all this she is forever free.

Ay, it is hard, I know, to have torn from you so sweet a flower, and all so suddenly, but the very memory of its beauty and loveliness should act as a magnet to draw you nearer God, and to that bright world where crowns are worn and thrones are given. And yet another thought :

3. Mortals are the subjects of temptations as long as they are here.

The most aged and perfect Christians are still tempted. All who have hope in Christ to-day are tempted, and expect to be ; but from all these all the good who have died are now delivered. From all these your child is now forever saved.

With the knowledge you have of temptation, and of the vigilance and grace necessary to overcome it, could you wish her back to earth ? I know that nature feels and sighs and yearns over the taking away of loved ones, and asks, but asks in vain, while here, for the reason ; but the annunciation of Jesus bids us hope for an answer as we read, "What I do thou knowest not now ; but thou shalt know hereafter."

I have read of a bright little boy, who started with his father on a fishing excursion on a large body of

water. Passing a beautiful island, the lad wished to be left there until his father's return. His desire was granted ; but during his stay a dense fog settled upon the waters, and thus the island was hidden from the sight of the father. When he wished to return he sought in various directions, but in vain, for the island and his boy. At length the little fellow heard the dip of his father's oars, and, apprehending his anxiety, cried out, "This way, father ; row this way." And, guided by his voice, the gentleman soon found the island and his son.

Dear friends, your child is not stopping on an island, amid a wide waste of waters, but on the highlands of heaven, the mount of God.

May the ever-present but invisible Spirit help you to hear a persuasive voice saying unto you, "This way, pa and ma ; row this way ;" and may grace be given you from this hour in the day of time to pull strong and to pull steady for

"The ever-green mountains of life."

Your child is there. There, through the redemption which is by Christ Jesus. There, to live and sing and shine forever.

"The tender, lovely, transient guest has gone,  
To hide her safe from sin and pain and sorrow,  
To hide her, with her God,  
To wait your upward flight,  
Your entrance into heaven ;

Nor need she wait in vain,  
 For by faith and hope and patience,  
 You, too, may gain the sunny side  
 Of death's dark river,  
 And look on her again  
 Beyond the floods.

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- “Himself hath done it” \* all! O, how those words  
 Should hush to silence every murmuring thought.  
 “Himself hath done it”—he who loves me best—  
 He who my soul with his own blood hath bought.
- “Himself hath done it.” Yes, although severe  
 May seem the stroke, and bitter the cup,  
 ’Tis his own hand that holds it; and I know  
 He’ll give me grace to drink it meekly up.
- “Himself hath done it.” O, no arm but his  
 Could e’er sustain beneath earth’s dreary lot;  
 But while I know he doeth all things well,  
 My heart his loving-kindness questions not.
- “Himself hath done it.” He who searched me through  
 Sees how I cling to earth’s ensnaring ties,  
 And so he breaks each reed on which my soul  
 Too much for happiness and joy relies.
- “Himself hath done it.” Then I fain would say—  
 Thy will in *all* things evermore be done;  
 E’en though that will remove whom best I love,  
 While Jesus lives I cannot be alone.
- “Himself hath done it.” Precious, precious words!  
 Himself—my Father, Saviour, Brother, Friend!  
 Whose faithfulness no variation knows—  
 Who, having loved me, loves me *to the end!*
- And when, in his eternal presence blest,  
 I at his feet my crown immortal cast,  
 “I’ll gladly own, with all his ransomed saints,  
 “Himself hath done it” all from first to last!

\* See Isaiah xxxviii, 15.

## A CHILDREN'S DAY ADDRESS.

YOUNG FRIENDS, SISTERS, AND BROTHERS: Our Father in heaven has given us the volume of nature, as well as the one we call the Bible, from which to learn of him ; therefore, in the things which he has made, may be found very many interesting lessons. “ The heavens declare the glory of God ; and the firmament showeth his handiwork.” He made the glorious sun and silvery moon and beautiful stars. It was his hand that built the hills and grand old mountains, that scooped out the deep oceans, seas, and lakes, and made the ways for the rivulets, brooks, and rivers to run in. Ay, it was his hand which made every thing in nature on which our feet do tread, our hands do handle, or our eyes do see. All the men now living, should their strength and skill be united, could not make a living tree, a fragrant, blushing rose, nor a single little fountain of sweet, delicious water. And here, right here, I’ve found my text. It is in the book of nature, the first book that was ever made, and made by our Father, God himself. I do not mean to tell you what my text is, for I think you are so good at guessing that I need not.

"Thou art a pretty fountain," said a man, as he arose from drinking of a spring, and passed on, no more to think of it until his thirst returned ; but it was not thus with another man who had drank at the same fountain. Standing and gazing into it for a while he exclaimed, "Thou art a sublime object!" Now, it may be, you are all anxious to know why this difference in those two men ! I will try to tell you. The first was very thirsty, and, having drank of the cooling spring, and being refreshed, carried his thoughts no farther. The fountain had served his purpose at that time, and, as he then needed no more of it, he cared no more about it ; the other, after drinking of it, looked upon it as the source of a mighty river, and, following it in thought, he saw it flowing through the great forests of India, receiving many other streams as it flowed toward the ocean, thus constantly increasing its volume, deepening its bed, widening its banks, and carrying on its yielding bosom vast ships, laden with the commerce of nations, and constituting an arm of the sea. Who could estimate the value of such a river, flowing from such a fountain ? Its usefulness began with the first thirst quenched at its visible source, and it will only end with the burning up of the world. This inclines me to think that I am standing before more than mere little fountains here to-day, and, for the sake of being better understood, I will call them

girl-fountains and boy-fountains ; and I will also say, every little girl and boy is either a good fountain or a bad fountain. St. James asks, “ Doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter ? ” I think he meant good when he wrote sweet, and bad when he wrote bitter. If you think so, too, hold up your right hands. Well, I have called you fountains, and have said you were either good or bad ones. Which had you rather be ? If good ones, hold up your right hands. You are fountains, then, and would rather be good ones than bad ones. So far, very well ; but I did not mean, nor did you, that you were fountains of water ; no, not at all. What fountains are you, then ? I guess you are thinking fountains, for the fact that you are here proves that you have thought of this place and of this hour, and, although I do not know what all your thoughts have been, I guess they have been interesting to you, because you look interesting, and our thoughts have a great deal to do with our looks.

Young fountains of thought—did you ever think of that ? Well, whether you have or not, it is as true as truth. For instance, take a person who has learned to love to think of God, of good men, and of good things, and who has learned to think that every cloud has a bright silver lining, and has acquired an ability to see it, and also to see the hand of God holding the stars in the heavens, and the pearly dew-

drops falling from his fingers, and you will always find him with a smile on his face and words of good cheer coming from his lips. The truth is, such a man lives in the sunshine, not because there are no clouds and shadows, but because his thoughts carry him beyond to the other side. It does one good just to look at such a man. His countenance seems to have been bathed in brightness, loveliness, and beauty.

Now, let us take another. One who will not think of God, only as he uses his name profanely ; who was never kind or obliging in all his life out of respect to God, but from purely selfish motives ; who acts just as if he thought the world and every thing in it was made for him ; who wants the sun to shine when it will not, and the rain to cease when it keeps on pouring, and his neighbors to think well of him when he does not deserve it, and who envies and hates every body that is more rich or happy or better looking than himself. Dear me, what a countenance he has ! Almost any one would say at first sight, "He has lived on sour grapes and pickles, and has been fighting thunder and lightning all his days. His anger-flashing eye glares mimic lightning, and his impetuous, wrathy voice utters mimic thunder. A common-sense child runs from him at once, as from an enemy. He looks bad, because his thoughts are bitter. The features of his soul are drawn with horrible

exactness on his face, with only this exception, mind takes a deeper, more permanent, and more alarming impression than matter.

Would any of these little thinking fountains here to-day like to become such great bitter fountains? If you would not, please hold up your left hands. Now, though I am sorry to say it, I am afraid you will, for it costs considerable to be a good, sweet fountain.

The farmers could raise, you know, large crops of weeds without any plowing or hoeing, but if they would raise great crops of corn or potatoes, they must plow and hoe a good deal. Thus it is with your minds, they will keep thinking and sending forth many bad thoughts without much training; but if you would have them send forth good thoughts, and many of them, your minds, your hearts, must be cultivated, and this is the reason why Sunday-schools have been instituted, and why your parents and friends are willing to give of their money to buy Sunday-school papers for you to read, and books to study; and this is, or at least should be, the reason why your teachers are willing to spend their time with you, and why they and the superintendent seek to instruct you. You see, I trust in all this, that they are laboring to give direction to your thoughts, so that they will run out toward the great sea of infinite love, from which flows the stream of redemption,

fringed on either side with flowers of promise—exotics from heaven.

May God help you each to learn to pluck those flowers with thankful hands, and, in thought, explore that sea ; not that you may ever hope to be able to bound it, or to fathom it, but that you may find employment suited to your spiritual natures, and thus grow larger of soul than you possibly could in any other pursuit.

Children and youth, you are more than thinking fountains ; you are fountains of feeling, also. I will take the liberty to call you feeling fountains ; and O, what fountains are these ? Laughing, playful, joyous fountains ; angry, brawling, raging fountains ; ever-varying, changing fountains. Sometimes there is not a ripple on their surface, and all is quiet, all is at rest. By and by the winds of opposition, disappointment, and detraction begin to blow, and these fountains of feeling are stirred to the very bottom. They dash and rave and foam and roar, O how furiously ! They break their bounds, and are seen knitting the brow, firing the eye, and sending forth the fist of wickedness in mischief-dealing blows. Bad fountains are these, and the streams which they send forth do more harm than all those of melted, burning lava which have ever flowed ; but, blessed be God ! good fountains have a place in this world, as well as bad ones. I am glad of that ; are not you, little girls

and boys? I have seen some of them, and they were beautiful to behold. All around these fountains are signs hung out, which guide you right to the fountains themselves. I will give you the names of some of these signs: Obedience to parents, Respect for superiors, Love for the Bible, Love for the Sunday-school, Songs of praise to Jesus, Desire to be good, Desire to be useful, and Thankfulness for all favors. Wherever you see the first of these you may generally, by looking, find one and another of the others mentioned, until you find the last, and there, right there, you will find a great and good fountain, and be made to know and to feel that it is good; for right there your own heart will be made a fountain of delightful emotions, of rapturous joy—a fountain of music, in which the passions will sing in harmony, making melody in the ears of God, melody for yourselves, and melody for the angels.

My dear young friends, I am glad of an opportunity of telling you that, though you live in a world of howling winds and pelting storms, of hungry floods and devouring fires, that there are also here gentle zephyrs, balmy breezes, singing birds and rosy bowers, pearly dew-drops and glorious sunshine, and that you may be happy here in spite of the war of the elements and the wrath of the sky; and I am glad to be here to tell you that your hearts may be taught, even in this very wicked, and, therefore, very un-

happy, world, to beat time to the melody of angels, and be made fountains of such feelings and affections as angels never knew, nor shall ever know. I am also here to tell you that it is your business to be happy. He who is not happy, even in this world, must have made a great blunder, a sad and bad mistake; but, if this be so, I think it may be corrected, or greatly remedied, and that God really intends it shall be; or, if not, that the blame shall not attach to him. Just think what a sun he has made and placed in the heavens. Its rays travel twelve million miles in a minute "to bless our waking eyes." What a moon, also, to give us light by night! And what boundless fields of stars! What air he gives us to breathe, what water to drink, and what a variety of food! I doubt if they have such cows and calves, such sheep and lambs, such elk and deer, or geese and turkeys, ducks and chickens, or bass and perch and trout in any other world as we have in this; and then, how vast the number of objects of loveliness, grandeur, and beauty!—all evidently intended for the happiness of man.

Myriads of forms, clothed in more than rainbow beauty, sending forth odors grateful to the smell, and inspiriting our whole being; towering mountains, with clouds above and below them, and whose peaks receive the first kiss of sunshine in the morning, and the last one in the evening as he sinks to rest behind

the western waves ; the rainbow, “born in a moment,” yet spanning the heavens, and “bended by the hand of our Father;” the dashing cascade, rippling streamlet, the flowing river, and the deep, blue sea ; but both time and ability are wanting to give more than a tithe of the diversified objects of loveliness which roll in space, spring from the earth, or constitute a part of it. They are above us, underneath us, and are thrown in beautiful profusion all around us. In the light of these facts, do you not see that I was right in saying that it is your business to be happy ?

Dear fountains of feeling, girls and boys, God wants you to be happy ; just as happy as you can bear to be. So happy, that your hearts will leap and bound for joy ; so happy, that you would just as soon live here “a thousand years to come,” as to go to heaven to-morrow ; so happy, that you could lay yourselves down to die as calmly as the smiling infant is laid away to sleep in its soft cradle-bed ; but you would all do well to remember the order of God : “First pure, then peaceable.” That means, first good, then happy. Never try to be happy without first trying to be good. Aim to be good, and happiness will certainly come and live in your hearts. Be good, and you will have what happiness is made of right in your hearts, and you can carry this with you into a hut as easily as you could carry it into a

palace. Now, are you asking, in those thinking, feeling fountains, "How are we to become good?" I will tell you: go in thought, in prayerful thought, to Jesus, and go often thus. He loves to have you come often, and it is still true,

"None but Jesus, none but Jesus,  
Can do helpless sinners good."

Do not be afraid or ashamed to go to him. He came all the way from heaven to earth to show you how he loved you, and how your feeling hearts might know his love. O he would a great deal rather you would come to him than stay away! Then go, in thought, to Jesus. Make a thinking trip to-day to the fountain he has "opened." Lift up your thoughts just now to the "Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." I urge you to do so the more because you are not only thinking and feeling fountains, but also fountains of influence. You cannot live in this world and talk and act without having an influence on others. As you are affected by the influence of others, so others are to be affected by your influence. If your lives are pure and good, your influence will be a blessing to the world forever; but if your lives are bad and sinful, your lives will be a curse to the world forever.

Sir Robert Raikes, of England, conceived the idea of gathering the ragged children of London into schools on Sundays for instruction, and, from that

one thinking, feeling, influential fountain, a noble, glorious stream has flowed, running from east to west, until its waters have penetrated every Christian land and community, and the numbers it has blessed cannot be counted. If Raikes is in glory now, and if it be given such to look down on earth, and to know the influence that their acts are still exerting, how happy he must be as he beholds, every Sunday, the millions of children singing hymns of praise, and reading and reciting portions of God's holy word.

Rev. John Wesley first devised a system of itinerancy in the Gospel ministry, but from that one fountain of sanctified influence has grown the mightiest Protestant Church in all Christendom ; and in our own land, the land we love the best, our dear and native land, and from a section of it, which, but a few years since was a wilderness, there arose a thinking, feeling fountain, so pure and good, that none but devils and traitors hated it, and none but the good, the oppressed, and the truly loyal loved it. Such a fountain arose, and its influence is pulsating and throbbing through the continent, and is to-day shaking the nations. True, an assassin's hand sealed the fountain of feeling, but before the horrid deed was perpetrated, waves of influence had rolled forth, breaking by their might the chains of slavery, and undermining the thrones of kings ; and they will roll

on and on, for God is behind them, and they cannot retreat. The loyal people of these lands, and the lovers of civil and religious liberty in all lands, shouted for joy at their going forth, and shall never be doomed to weep at their return. So, when I think of what these fountains of influence have done, and are doing, and look into the eyes of little boys, I am ready to exclaim, with the second man I mentioned in the beginning of this discourse, "Thou art a sublime object!" For as the little spring grew to be a mighty river, so a little boy may grow, if he lives a right life, to be a thinking, feeling, influential man.

Just think, and remember that you live in a land where there is no royal road to greatness, but in a land where the ignorant may become educated and learned, where the lowest may become the highest, where a shoe-maker arose to be a Representative, a cigar-maker to be a United States Senator, and a tanner to the Presidency; a land and a government, whose principles have been fought for, bled for, died for; and that you are expected to take the places of those who began to live from thirty to fifty years before you, and to fill them with honor to yourselves, and with fidelity to those who shall come after you. It may be that I shall never meet and speak to you all again, therefore let me entreat you, each and all, to seek to become fountains of good influence, never forgetting that—

“Mind lives again in mind ;  
 We each, on other, set our living seal.  
 Each act, each word, whate'er we think, or feel,  
 Is in some heart enshrined ;  
 'Twas in its birth our own,  
 Yet lives without us ; lives when we are gone ;  
 Shall live forever, or to bless or curse  
 This vast domain of life, this peopled universe.

“A stone dropped in the lake  
 Sends circling wavelets to the farthest shore,  
 Each fluttering leaf, each moving wing  
 The realms of air do shake.  
 Each rain-drop on the waves  
 Stirs every drop in ocean's boundless caves ;  
 The lightest footfall jars the solid earth,  
 So mind reacts on mind, so thought to thought gives birth.

“And is it, is it so ?  
 From all my heart indulges,  
 Shall I see issues momentous as eternity  
 Forever flow ? Be watchful, then, my soul !  
 Thy deeds, thy thoughts, thy wishes so control,  
 That each done, thought, or wished,  
 By millions more, shall prove a type  
 That thou nor they will e'er deplore.”

May the blessed Christ and Saviour draw you all to him, that, as fountains of thought and feeling and influence, you may evermore send forth those streams which shall adorn, beautify, and gladden human society, and thus help to hasten the day when “all shall know the Lord, from the least unto the greatest !”

Blessings, everlasting blessings, be upon you, “both young men and maidens, old men and children !”

## REMINISCENCES.

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### SERMON WRITING OR MAKING, AND SERMON READING.

MUCH has been said, written, and published on these subjects; and as I have been listening and reading and thinking about them for a number of years, I have concluded, in this paper, to give my views of them.

As to writing sermons, I think there has not been, and there is not likely to be, any serious or formidable objection presented. I believe that it is generally conceded that writing contributes to the elegance and perfection of public discourse, and that very few men have ever succeeded in becoming impressive public speakers without previously writing or in some way thoroughly elaborating their subjects. Sermon making is too sacred and responsible a thing to be done in a careless manner. The great number of volumes of sermons, both of a remote and of a recent date, prove that many sermons have been written; and the fact that Mr. Wesley and Watson and Benson, not to mention many of the Methodist ministers in our day, have given to the Church and the world

their written sermons, proves that to simply write sermons is not anti-Methodistical, nay, that it is Methodistically legitimate to do so.

A few men who have been favored with long and thorough mental discipline are capable, without pencil or pen and paper, of evolving a subject, either at home or abroad, or when traveling by private or public conveyance, and of getting it all so fixed in the mind as to be able to repeat it when before a large and promiscuous audience. But the many in the ministry have never been thus favored, and could not, if they would, thus prepare to appear before their congregations. Some, with the greatest care, write their sermons in full, and then commit them to memory, and thus deliver them from memory. A few of this class have become eminent speakers, and have been mentioned as models of extemporaneous preachers by those who could not bear to have a minister write his sermons. (?) All sermons, good, bad, and indifferent, are prepared, and it is equally true that the preparations have been worthy of a similar classification. No rule can be made which shall be of universal application in the preparation of sermons; we strongly incline to the opinion, however, that the better class are made with pen or pencil in hand.

Without further remarks on sermon writing or making, we will now consider sermon reading. This has not generally been practiced by the Methodist

ministry, and some do really think and believe that it has been a more efficient ministry than it would have been had the reading practice generally obtained. That, however, must have depended very much on the spirit and manner in which the reading was done.

God has given us his written word, and we esteem it a great privilege to read it, and to hear it read ; but how very different it sounds to us and affects us when well read than when poorly read. Our heavenly Father could have given us his word by inspiration just as we needed it, without subjecting us to the necessity of learning to read ; but he did not see fit to do so. Is it less his word, and is it less effectual, because we receive it in a written form, and not by a direct inspiration ?

Think how infinitely more easy he could thus communicate to us his will at every period in our history than any man could deliver a good extemporaneous sermon.

I think that the prejudice against reading sermons is the result of a careless and bad manner of reading them. So good a thing as a good sermon ought to be read well. And if it be not a good one, no extemporaneous delivery of it will supply that quality.

We are told that the visible manifestations of the great revival under Edwards were first made during the delivery of a sermon read by him in a moderate

tone of voice ; but so great was the measure of awakening power attending it, that every one in a large audience shrieked in anguish, and wept in their wailings.

In preaching the Gospel, it is not the expression of the eye nor the gesticulation of the head or of the hands which renders the meaning effectual ; but it is the adaptation of the truth to the condition and wants of the hearers, and the presence and blessing of the Holy Spirit. Now, as it is by the aid of the Spirit that all real Gospel sermons are prepared, whether in the mind, or also on paper, it is but reasonable to conclude that he is as willing to assist and attend the reading of a sermon as he can be in its extemporaneous delivery.

It may not be in good taste in this connection to speak of one's self, yet allow me to remark that, during all my efforts at making sermons for eighteen years of my ministry, I was never so graciously assisted as I have invariably been for the last nine years, in which all my sermons have been written. Their preparation has been a precious means of grace to me ; and, although they have all been delivered at the first writing, yet most of them have passed through a number of editions, each of which, I believe, has helped to make me a better man and a better minister.

To be alone with God and his own thoughts from

one to three days every week, placing before him a congregation whose thoughts and feelings and characters and destinies are to be affected favorably or otherwise by two discourses from him every Sabbath, should be sufficient to enlist a minister's best endeavors, and the sympathies and prayers of the Church, that "the trumpet" should give no "uncertain sound," but be intelligible—announcing revelations of wrath to the ungodly, and a joyful jubilee to the contrite and penitent. I can scarcely conceive of a minister thus preparing his sermons, and then taking them into the pulpit and reading them in a sleepy, prosy manner. Sermons thus prepared, whether delivered from memory or from manuscript, will be on fire of the Holy Ghost; and the truths they convey, like "the arrows of Acestes," will take fire in their flight and enter the hearts of men to melt them into tenderness before the Lord.

We had written thus far when we received the "Methodist Quarterly Review" for October, 1869, and, opening its pages, read Dr. Whedon's notice of the "Works of Rev. Leonidas L. Hamline, D.D., edited by Rev. F. G. Hibbard, D.D. Sermons. 12mo, pp. 432." In his notice, the good and astute doctor says: "They [the sermons] were written not for the press, but to be preached. As in preparing an argument for the bar, he had aimed at success with the jury, so, in preparing these sermons, he

wrote as in the presence of living men, every one of whom he must win to Christ. He aimed at immediate effect, and, to an almost marvelous degree, attained it."

Those powerful sermons, then, which some of us have heard as they fell from the lips of the living Hamline, were written sermons—written, memorized, and spoken; written, preserved, and now printed, so that they may be read and made a blessing to all who shall ever read them. Even so let it be; and may every one whose duty it is to preach "the glorious Gospel of the blessed God," who can better prepare his sermons in writing than otherwise, and better deliver them from manuscript than he possibly can in any other way, be sure to do so, always remembering that God requires him to do his best, and can never consistently bless any thing less than a high and holy endeavor.



#### BE NOT DECEIVED.

EMPHATICALLY to Christians is this gracious warning given, and never was their greater need of it than at the present time. I doubt if in any period of the history of the Church there have been a greater number beguiled from the simplicity of the Gospel than in the last few years. An inordinate love of gain has been permitted to enter the heart, and to

usurp the throne of God in the affections of his people, until they have become so deceived as to “suppose that gain is godliness;” and under this deception multitudes have given their influence and their votes to perpetrate money-making evils. Who that has any correct knowledge of the numerical strength of the different branches of the Church, in this country, can doubt that the humane and holy cause of temperance would have been carried forward to a grand and glorious success had even a respectable majority of Christians, in a perfectly legitimate way, given their influence and their votes to have secured it?

Who doubts that, had the whole ministry and the whole Church in America firmly, yet legitimately, set themselves against the active cause of the recent Satanic rebellion, slavery would have been removed without a resort to arms, and an appeal to “the God of battles?” With whom, then, belongs the settlement for the yet unmeasured amount of treasure, suffering, and blood poured out upon the nation’s altar? With whom but with those, North and South, who allowed themselves to be “deceived” in regard to the moral obligations that were upon them to oppose “unto the death” every national sin. Nor yet is the whole Church saved from deception in this matter, for there are still those who are so held by party ties, and so “deceived” as to moral obligation,

that they will not investigate the mental or moral qualifications of candidates for office, but proceed to support them simply, solely, because they belong to our party. And is it possible for individual influence and responsibility to be lost and obliterated by such a course of action? Is not God's eye upon the actions of the deceived as upon those of the intelligent and the true? And will he not hold him responsible both for his acts and his influence on the weal or the woe of the state or the nation in which he lives? He most surely will.

The sentiment expressed in the sentence, "All is right in politics," is infidel in its conception and tendency. It is both a falsehood and a lie; and the sooner all Christians come to regard it as such the better it will be for the Church and the imperiled interests of humanity.

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#### WHY HOPE MAKETH NOT ASHAMED.

THE love of God shed abroad in the heart is the king of forces in that dominion. All else is subject to it. It regulates our desires and thoughts, elevates and ennobles our affections, and contributes most of all things toward the formation and completion of the Christian character. It warms into life, and nourishes into maturity, patience and submission, long-suffering and gentleness, goodness and brotherly

kindness. It gives strength and beauty and real excellency to every grace and virtue. It sheds the tear of pity over the unfortunate, stretches forth the hand to assist the weak, is ready to instruct the ignorant, to encourage the desponding, and to labor in the prayer of faith for the elevation of the most degraded and miserable. It is going forth, through the efforts of its subjects, to destroy the fountains of human want and woe, and to proclaim to the coming generations of the race an eternal emancipation from sin and hell. It is on its way toward bloodless victories and fadeless crowns, winning its triumphs by the presence and might of the invisible Spirit, by which it is shed abroad in the hearts of the marshaled hosts of "the King Immortal."

It is when the Church is most baptized with this

"Love divine ! all love excelling,"

that she is the most active, useful, and aggressive. It is then that her tread shakes the earth, and her breath blesses the nations. It is in her large possession of this principle that all human kind is interested, and upon which depends the dawn of the millennial glory. God in Christ is now saving this world by those who are filled with his love. His Spirit is with them and in them. Their movements are not heralded by trumpet-notes nor the roar of cannon, but there follow in their path the pleadings

of penitents, and the singing and shoutings of the redeemed.

A sickly, feeble, lifeless, aristocratic Church can do but little to save the souls of men. The world is in terrible motion hellward, and, if overtaken and effectually warned of impending ruin, and turned to God, the Church must become healthy and strong and vigorous. She must take to herself the spirit and the form of a Christianity which is not content with riding on the most beautiful steam-boats and railway coaches, and of worshiping in costly churches, pillowed and cushioned as if for invalids; but that which goes on horseback and on foot to meet the emigrant from other lands with a free Gospel and a full salvation. A type of Christianity which follows the miner of coal and of copper into the bowels of the earth, and tells him that God thinks of him there, and that Jesus is interceding for him before the throne of infinite Majesty. A type of Christianity which goes and sits down by the side of the disappointed and bankrupt silver or gold digger and tells him of the golden gates and streets of an eternal city, and assures him that their possession and enjoyment, through Christ, is possible even to him. In brief, a type of Christianity which, not neglecting the highest, seeks to get nearest the lowest and those farthest from salvation, and which speaks to them the kindest and most earnest words of love about it.

## LESS THAN THE LEAST OF ALL SAINTS.

It seems to me that St. Paul excels all men in the utterance of expressions of humility. He not only accounted himself "the chief of sinners," and as "unworthy to be called an apostle," but felt himself to be "less than the least of all saints."

It is as if an individual would count an indefinite number of trees standing in a continuous row. Those nearest him could be plainly seen from root to topmost bough; but as he glances along from tree to tree each seems to lessen in size, until his eye rests on one away in the dim distance, "less than the least" of all he had beheld and counted.

Thus I have thought it might have been with the apostle, taking his position so near the beginning of the generations of men, that he first saw with ease Noah and Job and Enoch, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and, thrilled by their majestic bearing, and charmed by their heavenly spirits, he sends his mind along the line of the greater and lesser prophets, leaps the hiatus between the old and the new dispensations, gets a glimpse of John the Baptist, pauses to contemplate Jesus, and to adore him; then, as the great objects of Christ's mission begin to take form, in the calling of "the twelve," and sending them forth, and saying unto them, "As ye go, preach," he saw the multitudes moved by the living truths

proclaimed, even “publicans and harlots” won to Christ and goodness, Churches gathered, and away there, on his way to Damascus, a proud Pharisee, “exceedingly mad,” pressing on in hot haste, to accomplish a devilish purpose—himself! Himself made to listen to the voice of mercy; himself conquered by grace, and thoroughly won by love; himself farthest from God, yet “made nigh by the blood of Christ.”

The greater sinner a man sees himself to be the less he sees himself to be a saint.

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### NO PEACE.

SINNERS, as such, have “no peace.” Theirs, at the best, is but a state of unrest. A consciousness of being in the wrong is of itself a source of wretchedness; and when that wrong consists in opposition to an eternal rule of right, fixed by infinite Wisdom and Love for the government of the intelligent subjects of His dominion, how can it be otherwise than that whosoever is thus wrong shall have “no peace?” Moreover the sources from which sinners seek happiness proclaim them destitute of “peace.” You would account him idiotic or insane who should be seen walking the streets with a lighted lamp in his hand while the sun was shining in his strength; but such an act very faintly illustrates the folly of a soul,

grander in its wonderful faculties than the material universe, trying to get its fill of happiness in the possession of any number of thousands of dollars, the bursting bubble of fame, or the fickle friendship of a world sold to Satan, and in league with hell.

What must be thought of a starving man seeking to satisfy the terrible cravings of nature with a few blighted apples about the size of a thimble, when there were full-grown, mellow, and luscious ones in abundance lying within his reach, and of which he is at liberty to partake? Think of such a scene. Pause and consider it well. Then think of a soul, professing to be hungering for the bread of life, solemnly declaring that it "renounces the devil and all his works;" that it "will obediently keep God's holy word;" that it will "labor to promote the peace, the harmony, and the prosperity of the Church;" then think of such leaving "the house of God" for the dance-room, "the table of the Lord" for "the euchre deck," the reading of God's word for the very "froth of fiction," and you have a scene of wicked ridiculousness that is nearly without a parallel this side perdition. Ay, it is not only among those who have never professed faith in Christ that there is "no peace," but also among the many "who know their duty and who do it not."

## FAREWELL REMARKS OF A PASTOR.

BRETHREN AND FRIENDS: During the two years that we have been with you we have received twenty-three persons to the Church by letter, and eighteen on probation. Twelve of these have graduated to full membership, while six remain on trial. Two of your number have departed "to be with Christ," and three have removed with letters. Your net gain is—of members, thirty, and of probationers, six. We have attended twenty-one funerals and eleven weddings. For attending four of the funerals there was given us the sum of fourteen dollars, for the remaining seventeen, nothing. For attending the weddings we received the sum of forty-five dollars, an average of a fraction over four dollars. Of this sum one fourth, or eleven dollars twenty-five cents, is consecrated to the benevolent enterprises of the Church. We have baptized twelve persons, two by immersion, and ten by sprinkling.

Allow me here to express the sincere thanks of myself and wife to those who have so steadily and faithfully been with us in the prayer and class meetings. In these hallowed associations the most sanctified friendships are formed, and hence we shall expect to be remembered in the prayers of those who most regularly attended these precious means of

grace, when we shall be utterly forgotten by those who "know their duty, but who do it not."

As a Church, we have been enabled to see your capabilities, and to measure, in some good degree, your responsibilities. If a family, as such, would be respected and prosperous, they must keep family interests to themselves, fully agree among themselves, and each member faithfully perform his or her duty. In this way only can the Church family be respected and prosperous.

Finally, let me caution all who profess the religion of Jesus against littleness and stinginess in their dealings with men of the world. Many, who are otherwise good and worthy members of Churches, ruin their religious influence by allowing wicked men to get the impression that they would much rather pray for sinners than to feed the hungry. God help you, brethren, to do both!

We have not failed to hear of un-Christian utterances since we have been with you; but we have daily prayed for those who spoke them, and have treated them as kindly as if they had not said them. The religion we preach teaches us to do so, and the grace of God helps us to practice what we preach. "Brethren, farewell."

### . JOB'S KNOWLEDGE OF HIS REDEEMER.

How did Job obtain this knowledge? We answer, God himself must have imparted it. Among all the efforts of men to account for their possession of the idea of God in any other way, none have ever been successful, and the fact of this unsuccess furnishes strong presumptive evidence that this central and granite idea in the Christian system came at first from him.

God speaks to man, and says, "I am." To some of the race this cardinal truth has come through various mediums, to others only in the "whispers" of the Spirit. The idea, however, by means of God's ordaining, has been deposited with every rational soul. Hence, among those tribes and nations farthest removed as yet from Gospel light and privilege, the persuasion of the existence of a great First Cause, all-powerful and wise, obtains.

Job and all Christians knew, and do know, just as all other men have known, and do now know, that the "Redeemer liveth." Yet the good have this knowledge in greater fullness and perfection. To them it is a living verity—a sublime reality. Let us illustrate. Two men are standing, side by side, surveying the vast expanse of the wide Atlantic. In the dim distance an object is seen by both; but it is so very remote that even its outlines cannot be

traced. Each equally knows that it is something. Just what it is neither can tell. One says, "I am satisfied with the simple fact—it is something;" but the other says, "I cannot be, nor will I, until I know more perfectly." Science has given him the telescope; so, adjusting it to his eye, he looks in the direction of the object, when lo, the wreck of a ship, with men and women clinging to the fragments, rises up from the ocean and fills his mind with a scene of peril. He hastens to communicate the fact, and help, impelled by steam, flies to the rescue. So with men of the world, and so with Christian men. The one sees and hears and knows that the "Redeemer liveth," but sees and hears and knows imperfectly; the other apprehends Him, taking into his very soul his perfections and attributes, traces his wonderful acts, and cheerfully does his will; sees and knows him to be more than Creator and Preserver. He sees and knows him as his Redeemer, beholds him "treading the wine-press," and "coming with dyed garments from Bozrah." He hears the strokes of the hammer that drives the nails which fasten him to the rugged cross, and, strange contrast, the music of his soul, set to the words, "It is finished." He hears the tread, solemn and slow, of those who bear his precious body to the sepulcher, and witness the rolling away of the stone from its door, and the resurrection of his Lord; lingers with solicitude and

surprise on the mount of transfiguration, and catches the song and the chorus of the upper choir as the "eternal gates" are "lighted up" for his re-entrance into the glories of the realms of bliss. He hears the pleadings of his intercession before the throne, and feels celestial fires thrown by his gentle hands on his grateful and believing heart. He knows him as his Redeemer by the influence of his Spirit, begetting within him a love for every thing which he loves, and a disposition to do, in his measure, just what his Redeemer requires.



#### AS FAR AS JAMESTOWN.

I HAVE been informed that the Methodist Episcopal Church in Jamestown is considered a very desirable appointment in the Erie Conference. Some of the best talent in that large and influential body has for years filled and graced the pulpit. I remember that, in one instance, a distinguished and truly eloquent member of the Wyoming Conference had an invitation to become its pastor, and, accepting it, readily passed from that to one of the New York city churches. Among the number of great and worthy men who have served that church I have heard of one who, during his pastorate, became very much in love with his people, and really thought them to be all, or nearly all, that a pastor could desire his flock

to be. But the time came when he could constitutionally remain no longer with them. Of course, the separation was painful to both parties; but whether they sung on that occasion,

“When we asunder part  
It gives us inward pain;  
But we shall still be joined in heart,  
And hope to meet again,”

I do not know, but this, I have been told, did occur: The good pastor carried to his next pastorate so much love, and such a lively remembrance of his Jamestown people, that in the social meetings he would always make some reference to them. This, at first, was only thought of as an affectionate remembrance of sanctified friendship there formed, and hallowed associations in which he had there mingled; but after a time references to Jamestown became annoying, especially when he would say, “They did not do so in Jamestown;” or, “That is not as it was in Jamestown;” or, “That is something as it used to be in Jamestown.”

Finally, an impromptu council was held, and the inquiry was made, What can be done to put an end to this annoyance? After various expedients had been proposed, considered, and rejected, an old lady said, “Please leave the matter to me, and I think that at the next social meeting I can accomplish what we all so much desire.” This was accepted,

and the time of the next meeting was thought of with unusual interest.

At length it came, and a goodly number were present. During the meeting the pastor, as on former occasions, made some reference to Jamestown. The old lady arose, and, after relating some of her experience in the Christian life, remarked that, after all, she sometimes had doubts and fears as to her finally reaching heaven, but trusted, if that was denied her, "the Lord would at least take her as far as Jamestown." The remedy was effectual.

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#### A CONFERENCE REMINISCENCE.

AN evening was given to the anniversary exercises of the "East Genesee Conference Sunday-School Society." It was arranged to have three addresses; so, after the usual opening services of singing and prayer, and the report of the secretary had been read, the first speaker was announced, who, in a short and stirring speech, interested the large audience, and then gave place to the second. This brother had prepared an able but lengthy address, and proceeded to deliver it from manuscript.

Rev. Dr. Newman, who was present, had been requested to give the closing address, but, when called on, simply arose, and, alluding to the lateness of the hour, asked to be excused from speaking.

The cry, however, went forth, "Newman, Newman." He arose, and said in substance, "I am reminded to-night of what once transpired in a Quarterly Conference. A pious old lady from one of the new settlements heard that a presiding elder would be in one of the older settlements at a given time, and having a great desire to secure preaching where she lived, made her way to him. Without delay she told him of their wants, and inquired if he could not send them 'a circus preacher.' He replied, 'All the circuit preachers have all that they can do, and could not increase the number of their appointments. 'Well, then,' said the old lady, 'haven't you a locus preacher that you could send in to preach to us?' The elder said, 'I know of none that I could get.' 'Well, then,' said the earnest woman, 'send us an exhauster;' and," added the doctor, "we've had the exhauster." Of course all, even the victim, heartily laughed, and were well pleased with his speech.

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#### STOOL-PIGEONS—EXTRAORDINARY.

A NUMBER of events have transpired latterly which have awakened in my mind the recollection of the capture of wild pigeons in my boyhood days. Two brothers, neighbors of my father, used to take a great many of them almost every spring. They knit their own nets, prepared "the beds" on which to spring

them, and the “bough houses” in which to secrete themselves, and from which, by small ropes, they worked the treadle to which was fastened the decoy-bird, and also sprang the net which captured the unsuspecting ones. The bird on the treadle was called the “stool-pigeon;” and, as by his flutterings the attention of the passing flocks was secured, and their flight turned to the bed, he was an important factor in the success of this primitive enterprise.

Now, though I have not known of a single instance of thus capturing pigeons in the last twenty-five years, yet within that time the principle has been pretty thoroughly worked and applied to other purposes.

The “Silver Lake Sea-serpent,” made of India-rubber, the “Cardiff Giant,” and the more recent “Pre-historic Man,” are examples quite to the point. By them were the hundreds and the thousands (which the “Fool-killer” had spared) “netted,” or humbugged, and then let loose, to be captured again. In neither of these cases was the thing used to attract and gather the crowd at all responsible. I am sorry to say that, in other instances, this cannot in truth be said.

1. When ministers of the Gospel allow themselves to accompany Sunday excursions to places of popular resort, and make engagements to speak on such occasions; when, to do so, they but consent to act the part of “stool-pigeons,” and to lend their presence

and influence to give some character and respectability to absolute Sabbath desecration.

2. When ministers accept invitations from the proprietors of great hotels to preach in their parlors Sabbath afternoons, that many young men and women may be drawn into their “nets,” and that a greater number of “drinks and cigars” may be sold than in any other afternoon during the week. Such unique and blameworthy “stool-pigeon” ministers are scarce as yet, and we trust their number may grow “beautifully less” in a hurry until none shall be found, even unwittingly, to thus abet Sabbath-breaking.

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#### PLEASANTRIES AND WIT.

DURING the principalship of Professor Colt (Presbyterian) at Wyalusing, Pa., the then Rev. (and since Hon.) George Landon was invited to deliver an address to the students and patrons of the seminary on “Education.” In the course of his truly instructive and eloquent speech he sought to illustrate some point by the relation of the following unique and remarkable circumstance in the ministry of the great and good Dr. Robert Hall, of England. He said:

“At the close of a funeral sermon, preached by Mr. Hall, the husband of the departed arose and delivered an exhortation. A number of ministers present were invited by Mr. Hall to go with him to his

home for tea. Among them was one, quite young, who, after their arrival, said, ‘Brother Hall, how did you like that old man’s exhortation?’

“Mr. Hall replied, ‘That old gentleman and his wife have been members of my Church many years.’

“‘But,’ said the young minister, ‘I inquired what you thought of his exhortation?’

“Mr. Hall then said, ‘I have been acquainted with him a long time, and think him to be a very good man.’

“‘Why, Mr. Hall,’ said the young minister, ‘I wish you would tell me what you thought of his exhortation.’

“‘I thought,’ said Mr. Hall, ‘that he was an ordained fool, and that he has made his calling and election sure to-day.’”

When Mr. Landon had finished his address many voices were heard calling for Professor Colt to speak. At length he arose, and with more playfulness than gravity in his countenance, simply excused himself by saying, “I have no disposition to prove myself an ordained fool, nor to make my calling and election sure.”

Of course he was excused, amid peals of laughter.

The same Mr. Landon was once addressing a crowded congregation in a school-house at Brown-town on the subject of temperance. His rostrum was the floor, and his desk a rustic chair. He had

not been long speaking before a very much intoxicated person rudely sought to enter. A number near the door arose, as if they would put him out ; but Mr. Landon at once remonstrated, bidding them conduct the gentleman forward that he might occupy the chair, adding, “ When I used to lecture on Botany I wanted the blossoms right before me.”

Some thirteen years after the “ North Branch Canal ” had been constructing, and a year or more before its completion, a vast audience, assembled at a county fair near Towanda, were disappointed by the non-arrival of either Mr. Seymour or Mr. Greeley, who were to speak on the occasion. When this fact became generally known the shout went forth for “ Landon.”

At length, yielding to the demands, he proceeded to address the people on “ Internal Improvements,” and at a most appropriate point in his speech mirrored to the listening crowd the wonderful benefit coming to that portion of the State from the North Branch Canal, “ providing one end does not rot off before the other is finished.”

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#### QUACKS AND REGULARS.

ABOUT forty years ago a graduate of one of the best medical colleges in the United States sought to establish himself as a physician in a rural village in

Western New York. There had preceded him by two or three years a “professional quack,” who, by his practical sense, had secured to himself an extensive and lucrative practice. Months passed away, and the young physician had but few calls. He refused to make the acquaintance of the quack, avoided meeting him, and chafed exceedingly at his popularity among the people.

One Sabbath, just as the only congregation of worshipers in the place was coming from the church into the street these doctors met. The quack pleasantly accosted the other, but was met with, “Sir, I do not want any conversation with you.”

“Well,” said the quack, “for your sake and the sake of a few others, I would like to ask you a question.”

“Ask it, then,” was the short reply.

“How many people do you think have come out of that church?”

“Possibly about four hundred; but what of that?”

“Well,” said the quack, “how many of them are really well enough informed to be capable of judging between our relative merits as doctors?”

“It may be,” said the young man, “not more than half of them.”

“Do you really think there are half?” said the quack.

"Well, indeed," said the other, "it is possible no more than a fourth of them are."

"But," said the quack, "you have the number still too high."

"Well, how many do you think?" said the young man.

"I think there are only about one in ten, or forty out of the four hundred, and that you will prescribe for the forty and I for the three hundred and sixty."

Let the reader draw his own lesson.

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#### REV. JOHN PARKER—HIS FRIENDSHIP FOR TEMPERANCE AND VENERATION FOR GODLINESS.

THE notice of the death of Rev. John Parker is not only a just tribute to the memory of an earnest, good man and minister, but is also suggestive of some traits of character which should always be represented in the presiding eldership of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He succeeded the Rev. A. N. Filmore in that office on the Elmira District, East Genesee Conference, in the fall of 1852.

At that time the writer of this was appointed to the charge of the Jackson Circuit, in Tioga County, Pa., which embraced French Mills, Judson Hill, Rowley's and Wortendike's, in Wells Township, Bradford County.

The Sons of Temperance and the Good Templars were instituting divisions and lodges all through the county, and every minister and member of the different churches was expected to stand out in his personality against intemperance. In our measure, and with a hearty good-will, we did so. This, however, brought upon us the ill-will of at least two then prominent members of the official board, so that at the last Quarterly Conference of the year, when the presiding elder inquired as to the wishes of that body respecting my return another year, these brethren promptly opposed it. On inquiring into the cause of their opposition, it was substantially asserted that I had become connected with the "Sons of Temperance," and that I preached against intemperance and prayed against it every-where, and that I had time and again preached against Sabbath-breaking, dishonesty in voting, and even against licentiousness in all its forms.

Thus, as they seemed to think, a very strong reason existed why I should be removed, whereupon Brother Parker said, "Are these things really true?"

"Yes, they are really true."

"Well," said he, "I believe they are, and they, being true, constitute the best of reasons for his return, and unless he utterly refuses, you may expect him for your pastor another year."

We returned. The two official members referred

to at once withdrew from the church, (we could not give them letters,) but subsequently reconsidered their action and were reinstated, both aiding the same year in the erection of the First Methodist Episcopal Church edifice of —, Pa., in which God is still worshiped, and of which it may in truth be said, "This and that man was born there."

Doubtless it was the ability and disposition of this honored servant of God in that and similar cases which has contributed much to the establishment and permanency of the Church of his choice wherever he was permitted to serve her.

We first heard him preach in 1840, at Honeoye, N. Y. It was an expository discourse on "The rich man and Lazarus," at once instructive, attractive, and impressive. Then he had two brothers in the ministry—Robert, older than himself, and Samuel, younger. Two of the once eloquent and powerful trio have crossed the billowy stream, and have been greeted on the other shore, while the younger, though aged now, waits for the arrival of the "time of his departure" at his quiet home in Hopewell, Ontario County, N. Y. "The memory of the just is blessed."

## THE HISTORY OF A WEEK.

THE morning of June 28, 1871, found me the guest of Dr. Bryan, in Ovid, N. Y. I had spent the night in a most refreshing slumber, and, arising some time before the family, had held communion with lovely, voicy nature and its glorious Author, whom we call "Our Father." After a delicious breakfast and a season of worship, the doctor allowed me to ride with him some nine miles in a buggy, where I found a friend of other years, who kindly let me have his "family rig" to go to my home and return with it, to North Hector, in time for the evening boat for Watkins. The ride of ten miles to the latter place at this season of the year, and near the close of the day, is one of the most gratifying. The scenery of lake and shore, of wheat and grass-fields, intermingled with strips of woodland, "dark with heavy foliage," and plats of grapes, now promising abundant fruitage, with here and there a glen and water-fall mingling with the ripple of the waters on the shore, all conspire to fill the hour with interest, and to leave mirrored on the halls of memory pictures of beauty and sources of joy.

At Watkins we took the cars for Elmira, where we arrived before dark. Called at the parsonage of the First Methodist Episcopal Church, but found the pastor, Rev. T. Tousey, gone to Lockport. Paused

a few moments to look at the deep, broad, and substantial foundation of the new church edifice in process of building, and then passed on "over the river" to our dear good friend's, M. V. Swan, and "tarried for a night."

A glorious morning was the 29th to those who were up by four o'clock to enjoy it. An early breakfast gave us an opportunity to call on some dear friends on Ann Street, to write a couple of letters, and to be ready in good season to take the Lehigh Valley cars for Towanda, Pa. This is a new road, the northern terminus of which was Waverly; but during the past year arrangements have been made with the Erie, by which, with the laying of an extra rail, it has gone to Elmira. I judge that the Erie gets remuneration in the use of the Lehigh Valley road from Towanda to Waverly, over which her Barclay coal must come to the north.

We arrived at Towanda about 1:30 A. M., and were not a little surprised at the increased dimensions of the place. Being generally recognized, though absent about four years, an hour or more was pleasantly spent in a number of "personal encounters" with friends of the past, but of the never-to-be-forgotten.

At 1:30 P. M. we found a comfortable way of getting to the Monroeton Camp-meeting, four miles distant. Rev. O. L. Gibson, of Towanda, was in charge

of the meeting, who, with his wife and four little children, were nicely quartered in a good tent, while their cow was hard by, in pasture, to furnish them with milk. A capital idea, I thought, and quite primitive too, if we read history aright. Here we had recently spent three years of our ministry, and the goodly number who had been brought into the Church while we were with them, and the many whose dead we had helped to bury, and the numbers whom we had joined in holy matrimony, rendered it a season of peculiar interest to me. The meeting was well attended, well conducted, and on the whole, I think as good and as great in its visible results as any that I have ever known.

Brothers Hard, Bennett, and Bartle, of the praying band, were present, and both received and communicated great blessings—that is, they were the instruments of great good to others, and received great good to themselves.

The meeting on the ground was closed Saturday afternoon, July 1, but I learned that the three brethren just mentioned were going to hold a meeting in Monroeton Borough in the evening, and that they would spend the Sabbath there.

I arrived at Burlington about sunset Saturday evening, and stopped for the night with Brother Jacob Morley, who, with myself, hold the relation of grandfather to a fine little boy, now nearly four years

old. His mother, our third daughter, rests in the old church-yard, where the great, the good, and the brave lie sleeping side by side. But "the grave" is our debtor, and Heaven will coerce payment. We wait with intense interest when there shall be given back to us our dead, but we wait in hope.

Sabbath morning we went with the excellent young pastor and preacher, Brother Lowell, to West Burlington, and preached to the Hiltons, Rockwells, Blackwells, Pratts, Foulkes, Dewitts, Stiles, etc. ; at two P M. in the Jesse M'Kean District, and at evening in Burlington Borough.

We took tea with Mr. W D. Gamage and family, finding them, with the many other friends of former years, prosperous and happy.

May God bless the Burlingtonian Methodists and friends, and give them very many to walk with them in the way to a glory-home !

Monday, July 3, we went to Troy. Saw Brother Wentz, pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the very excellent parsonage, which is being built under his supervision. Dined with the liberal Christian gentleman and merchant, G. N. Newbery ; and taking tea with the rising artist, B. F. Beebe, left by the evening train for Canton. Here we stopped with Brother M. C. Dean, now in charge of this important station, and where we commenced our itinerant labors twenty-nine years ago.

On the 4th, by means of a horse and buggy, we ascended the Armenia mountain, and spent three or four hours along the beautiful Tioga, "thankful to Him who made the sun and us, and still protects us, and gives us flowers and showers, and stomachs and meat, and content and leisure to go a-fishing."

A day in the woods with a friend and a brother is a rare luxury, and is keenly relished by every lover of nature. While it relieves the brain it invigorates the heart, and soothes and sweetens the very soul. Another night with Brother D., and a breakfast of trout, and we left these scenes and associations of the long by-gone on the morning of the 5th, and arrived in the evening at our home—the new parsonage—at Logan.

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#### A RESPONSE.

IT is a rare accomplishment to so receive stranger guests as to give them a home feeling at once. Having on a former occasion heard a few utterances from the eloquent lips of him who so cordially welcomes us here to-day, I shall not be surprised to learn that all those on whose behalf I respond have already felt assured of a kind and generous entertainment; anticipating this, allow me even now to thank you, sir, and, through you, all those you represent, for the greeting you and they have given us.

We are here as fellow-workers in a field of vast extent, of wonderful possibilities, and of the richest and most enduring rewards. Our work is almost exclusively with minds and characters in a formative state, the beauty and complexion of which will be fixed for weal or woe by the competency or the incompetency of those who teach them. Hence the greatest care and wisdom should be exercised in the selection of teachers. It is doubtless true that

“Mind lives again in mind,  
We each on other set our seal.”

And thus it is of the utmost importance that the teaching and guiding of the young be given only to those who, by example, as well as by oral instruction, shall lead in the way to purity and peace. The lumberman consigns not his boards or shingles to the sport of the brimming river, but places them in charge of skillful pilots and of able and obedient hands. The productions of other countries reach not our shores merely in sea-worthy vessels, but under the guidance of experienced and competent mariners. We place not our persons or our wares on lines of railroads or of steam-vessels where we know there is a lack of care and a want of responsibility, but rather on those where is believed to be the best of care and the greatest responsibility. Thus should it always be with those who have the difficult task of selecting or

appointing the teachers in our Sunday-schools. Great interests require great care and the very best attention, and, as the spiritual interests of children and youth transcend in importance all others, they should be confided only to those who will care and do for them the best.

One of the chief solicitudes of all extensive tourists is the procuring of competent guides ; such secured, they go forth and tread the fertile plains and rugged mountains of distant lands, and, returning, bring pictures of the lovely, the beautiful, and the sublime infix'd on their minds, which shall be a source of pleasure while life shall last.

Who that has followed Stephens, or Olin, or Durbin, or Taylor, or Livingstone, or Stanley, has not desired his safety and felt concern for him lest his guides should either be recreant or incompetent ?

The subjects of Sunday-school instruction are taking on their minds impressions and images of truths which they shall carry with them into an eternal state, and which they shall have to look at and contemplate for ever and ever. Shall they be beautiful or horrible ? Shall they be such as have the power to pierce the soul with pain, or to flood it with delight ? Shall they have pictures of moral beauty thronging the galleries of their minds, or shall they have transferred to the halls of their souls scenes of night and deeds of darkness vile and

black with sin? The interests at stake demand an answer; but it is only from competent teachers that a truthful, practical answer may reasonably be expected. Who, then, are competent teachers in a Sunday-school? I answer, only those who are taught of God, and who are earnestly seeking to know and do his will. Such, I think, are found proportionately in as great numbers now as in any former period of the history of the Sunday-school movement, but the supply in this department has never been equal to the demand. It has been, and is still, a felt and pressing want; for though it opens to the most intelligent and cultured minds that are in the different churches doors of usefulness equal to any in the broad field of Church labor, and gives as large promise of reward and high and honorable association and communion as any other; but very few, comparatively, fully consecrate themselves to it.

In my childhood years I remember that an earnest layman from the western part of Hector (then in this county) came into the eastern and organized a Sunday-school. It was the first of which I ever had any knowledge. Some twenty-five years later I met that man as a minister of the Gospel. He told me that at the time he organized the school in our district he had sixteen schools under his supervision, and that he had them so arranged that he could visit all of them every month by being present at four every

Sunday. He is still living, and in the active work of the ministry and of Sunday-school labors. God has greatly honored him, all earnest workers in other denominations respect and reverence him, and, in the person of his noble son and the numbers of others raised up through his "work of faith and labor of love," he is likely to continue his work for at least "a hundred years to come."

"Lives of good men all remind us  
We may make our lives sublime."

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#### LITTLES, AND TO WHAT DO THEY GROW.

ON January 1, 1800, a little man, with a correspondingly little ax, began the removal of all the timber from six acres of land, upon which now stands the court-house, the various churches, the graded school buildings, and the many beautiful and costly places of business and residences, constituting the large and flourishing village of Bath, Steuben County, N. Y.

We knew that man in 1848, '49; he then owned seven hundred acres of valuable farm and timber lands, and said to me on one occasion, "I cleared and fenced six hundred acres for other people before I did any thing for myself."

In Burlington, Conn., on May 10, 1797, there was born to a pious mother a little, feeble babe, and until it had lived nearly two years, did any one who knew

it, but the devoted mother, think it possible that it would ever develop into a healthy child, much less attain to manhood. But about this time the child began to show signs of a more vigorous life, and the mother added "Lent" to the name she had given him ; and of that little, feeble babe there came to be a lawyer, standing at the head of his profession in the great State of Ohio, and subsequently one of the most eloquent and distinguished Bishops in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Little by little the acquisitions in knowledge are obtained, and the difference between a Newton at ten and at seventy is prodigious indeed, yet the former is as essential to the latter as is the acorn to the oak.

Within the easy recollection of even youthful persons a little company of thoughtful, earnest young men organized what has already come to be the great and good and grand "Young Men's Christian Association."

"The International Committee of the United States and Canada report statistics for 1882 of 779 associations, of which 759 have an aggregate membership of 72,372, and 69 own buildings valued at \$4,700,473."

How rapid a gathering of Christian forces and of consecrated material wealth ! How many young men, by these associations, have been led from the

wrong to the right, inducted into the “ways of pleasantness and the paths of peace,” and are steadily approaching the sublimest destiny known to human hopes and aspirations—a blissful immortality—none can tell.

That first glass is a very little thing, viewed by itself, isolated and alone, but considered in its relation to succeeding acts, traced in its influence on the steadily downward course of its subject until his self-respect is gone, and the pleadings of the dearest earthly relationships are disregarded; then look upon him as he really seems to see serpents and devils in pursuit; listen to his strange medley of imprecation and of prayer, the one as the other utterly unavailing, and believe, if you can, that the first glass, that little thing, has had nothing to do with his character, happiness, and destiny! The sixty thousand who annually die as drunkards at one time in their history had only taken one glass each; at another, a glass occasionally; but these occasions fearfully, rapidly multiplied until there came to be no intermission. Habits make character, and character makes destiny. Ay, what a destiny for sixty thousand souls! The heart sickens at the thought, and the brain is burdened at the contemplation of the untold misery experienced by the widows and children of these thousand of victims of rum. And still this work of death is going on. By day and by

night it is going on. Week-days and Sabbath-day it is going on, and as surely and steadily in the homes of the rich as it is in the cottages and hovels of the poor. Its blight and mildew breath withers unto death the high and the low without distinction, and, blending their fondest, grandest hopes, buries these in a wreck of ruins.

Let us then, Good Templars, be faithful to our vows ; and, renewing them, with every defection from our ranks, as well as with every addition to them, gird ourselves for the conflict, and be content to "labor and to wait" until far along our ranks shall be borne in glad acclaim the joyful tidings : The battle is ended, the license system is damned, as of right it should be, and total prohibition reigns supreme !

O God, give this all this, if not to us, unto our children and children's children forever, and they and we will praise thee.



#### A PASTOR'S REMINISCENCE.

SCARCELY a day passes but that I am impressed with a sense of the value of your Daily to me and mine. Isolated somewhat as we are from scenes and associations, which for years were dear to us, its daily perusal keeps many of the names of loved ones fresh in our memory, and serves, in a good degree, as a

reminder of events in which we shared some humble part in the years which have rolled away.

But a few days ago we read in one of its pages an account of the sudden departure of Mrs. Dr. Gere, of Chemung, who was a neighbor and friend indeed for the two years we spent in that pleasant little hamlet; and now, to-day, it brings to us the sad intelligence of the death of the truly noble and manly David Everitt, whom we knew in early manhood, and whom we had both the pleasure and honor of joining in holy matrimony, as we also did one of his brothers and two of his sisters.

“Uncle Billy” and “Aunt Laura” Everitt, with their six sons and six daughters, in the then new and well-furnished house, constituted a scene of domestic happiness and thrift seldom met with, and never surpassed by any I have known during an itinerant ministry of thirty-eight years.

In the summer of 1839 three sisters, the children of Mr. Jacob Larrison, were among my pupils at Daggett’s Mills, Pa. I married, in 1854, I think, the oldest, Naomi, and Mr. Edward Everitt; and in 1855 the youngest, Annie, and Mr. David Everitt. May the invisible Comforter be with her and her children, and abounding grace and infinite consolation come to the aged and maimed mother!

## UNCLE PETER AND AUNT PATTY.

I FIND myself living in a neat and comfortable house, purchased a few years ago by the trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Sheldrake with funds, for the most part, left them by the last will and testament of Mrs. Peter Sherman. Mr. Sherman and his wife were among the first settlers in this truly picturesque and beautiful place, where they long lived, and were familiarly called "Uncle Peter" and "Aunt Patty." They reared no children of their own, but a number of adopted ones, and as he was brother to my maternal grandmother, I have been not a little interested in the various incidents related to me by some of their neighbors. They were among the first converts to Methodism in this region, and their house was regarded as the home of the early itinerants, who had the toil and the honor of first seeking to "spread scriptural holiness" "between the lakes." It was in their dwelling that nearly all the public and social religious services were held for many years. There, also, at different times, the erring and the sinning were the subjects of influences and impressions which helped them to higher resolves, and to purer, better lives.

Mrs. J. J. Covert informs me that for forty years a Wednesday evening prayer-meeting was sustained by that devoted family without a single omission.

If storms or other hinderances prevented neighbors from attending there, successors of "Zacharias and Elisabeth," with their "household," had their season of praise and prayer. Frequently their largest and best room would be crowded with attendants, and, as "Aunt Patty" was a model of neatness, "Uncle Peter" would occasionally say to the comers, "Leave your quids of tobacco out-of-doors, and if you feel that you must keep your mouths in motion, we will give you bread and butter."

Of course, every one put himself on his good behavior; and these meetings are spoken of and remembered by the few survivors as having been among the brightest spots in their past history.

This saintly couple lived to a good old age: "Uncle Peter" until he was eighty-six years one month and seventeen days; "Aunt Patty" until she was eighty-six years and twenty-five days: the former dying October 14, 1848; the latter, November 23, 1849. Their bodies rest side by side in the beautiful cemetery, made of grounds forming the south-west corner of their long-cultivated homestead, and from which the eye sweeps the broadest portion of the Cayuga.

"In age and feebleness extreme" "Uncle Peter" became a great care, having lost the power to recognize his nearest, dearest friends; even the wife of his youth, the companion of so many years, was forgot-

ten ; and even those who performed, almost hourly, offices of kindness, passing into another room and returning, would not be remembered ; and yet the mention of the name of his Saviour and Lord would at once awaken his soul to joy, and call forth most fervent and appropriate expressions of thanks and praise.

The dwelling in which these lived so long and well was a frame, made of sills and plates, posts and beams and rafters. There were ten bents. These were something more than three feet apart, and the spaces between the siding and the ceiling and the bents were filled with twigs and with mortar made of common earth. Within the last three months this primitive structure has been taken down to give place to a modern carriage-house ; and as I passed the spot to-day, and looked at portions of that honored habitation, I thought how rapidly are all the ancient landmarks disappearing, and how soon the time will come when but a very few will remember that we have ever lived.

“ ’Tis immortality, ’tis that alone,  
Amid life’s pains, abasements, emptiness,  
The soul can comfort, elevate, and fill.”

## METHODIST PARSONAGES AND BEAUTIFUL HOMES.

AMONG the many objects of loveliness to which my mind has turned of late, and which have drawn forth expressions of gratitude from my very heart, are the places of residence which the Church has provided for me and mine.

I have just entered upon the fortieth year in the itinerancy, and in recalling about half that number of charges to which I have been appointed, I can only remember two that were not really desirable places of abode. Fourteen of these were parsonages belonging to their respective charges, and, with scarcely an exception, they had been wisely located, conveniently constructed, quite comfortably furnished, and kept in good repair.

In all of them we have had a home with those to love us and to be loved in return, where the dearest and holiest relations have been held, and the deepest, purest affections have been brought to birth and nourished into undying friendships and hopes of endless unions and communions in the life and home eternal. Ministrations of sufferings have also been endured in some of these which have disciplined souls into the sublimest of victors, and bringing to them baptisms of blessings which have made them to shout at the noise of the wings of death's angel, and to sing for joy on being told that the hour of

departure drew nigh. The externals of some of these homes have not been particularly attractive ; no especial pains had been taken to make them so ; but internally other tastes and skill had been employed, and order and cleanliness and the charm of intelligent housewifery made every thing beautiful and good and to be thankfully remembered. True, none of them were perfection in all respects, and we could have found fault with the best of them, for it requires little genius and less grace to do so about any thing ; but having in some way gotten the impression that homes, like villages and cities, are what their respective inhabitants make them, we have sought to make ours, wherever it has providentially been, pleasant and cheerful and good and happy, demonstrating to those with whom we have become acquainted that an itinerant ministry need not of necessity be one of constant complaining, and, therefore, destructive in its influence of the good it is intended to accomplish.

Few men in the pastorates of the evangelical churches of this land have more permanent homes than those of Methodism, while the changes, for the most part, in those of other churches are often abrupt, unexpected, and very frequently affecting the good name and influence of pastors as well as of the churches for years, if not for all their future history. Hence I have come to distrust the good sense and grace of some dear brethren in our ministry who, on

being removed at the end of their first or second year on a charge, are anxious to know all the reasons for these things, and, not being able to get them all, question the action in their respective cases, and, instead of being thankful that the Church has provided them with any place to preach such a “glorious Gospel,” make themselves and families and people uncomfortable and ill at ease while their relation continues.

Now this has been transpiring in our Church ever since its organization, and yet a listener to some of these complainers might come to the conclusion that these circumstances were “brand-new” things in Methodist economy and usage. In Methodism certain rights and privileges have always been relinquished, both by the ministry and the laity, for the general good ; and if it continues to bless the masses as it has in the past, both will have to submit, prayerfully and thankfully, to the yielding of personal preferences, and accept occasional disappointments ; and the homes of Methodist ministers must be the places in which lessons of submission are taught and practiced.

**THE END.**

